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SELF-TEACHING IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

HETTY LEE HOLLAND, M.A.

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By

HETTY LEE HOLLAND, M.A.

*Author of Lessons on the Life of Our Lord,
Talks to the Training Class, etc.*



NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION
57 and 59, LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C. 4

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I.—INTRODUCTORY.

“THIS is the brake; you press it like this, and it stops the wheel. These are the pedals; you must see they are flat before you put your feet upon them. These are the handle-bars. When you mount you must take hold of the handle-bars with both hands and see they are square with the fork that holds the front wheel. Then turn the pedals until the right one is in a descending position, place your right foot upon it, grasp the handle-bars lightly, and spring into the saddle, at the same time pushing your right foot down on the pedal, and lift your left foot from the ground. As the left pedal comes up, feel for it with your left foot, and you will be away. If the pedal gets stiff, you can take it off this way —. If you want to stop you must”

So the voice of the kindly uncle rambled on and on, and the fourteen year old niece, owner of her first bicycle, stood impatiently by. “Why doesn’t he stop talking?” she was thinking. “How can I remember all that now?” “Why doesn’t he let go of *my* machine? Why can’t he let me get on? I shall never learn this way.”

At last it was over—the “talky talky” lesson which seemed so long—and the girl was hurrying off down a side street to examine her own bicycle, experiment with it all by herself, *to teach herself* indeed, to mount, to ride, to turn, to stop. How much more delightful it was to press down your own brake than to hear it talked about. How glorious it was really to mount all by oneself—to

get off neatly—to ride without wobbling! Then when she had been *teaching herself* a little while, our girl was not averse to an expert's oral "lesson," the explanation of a difficulty she had already felt, the answer to a question she had already wanted to know. In fact, the grown-up did not have to seek out his pupil, for the pupil it was who sought out her Teacher. She had begun *to teach herself—to want to teach herself*—and in this process she had discovered the need of a Teacher to help her forward.

Now what has all this to do with the Sunday School? As we used to say to our Sunday School scholars when we told them a story, and were wishful to point a moral—"what can we learn from this?" Many things.

TEACHING A GRADUAL PROCESS.

(1) First of all, *that we cannot teach all we want to teach at once.* We can only teach as fast as the scholars can learn. The "uncle" we have described wanted to teach his niece all about the bicycle in one comprehensive lesson, to explain the difficulties *before* the girl had felt them, answer her questions *before* she had asked them, and, in short, put the girl in immediate possession of all the knowledge and experience the elder had himself gained. It cannot be done. All teaching implies learning, and in reality *learning is teaching yourself.* We may find ourselves face to face with a class of eager promising adolescents. We may long to pour forth to them all our deepest spiritual experience, to testify to them of the value we have found in prayer and worship, to make clear to them what we have discovered and made certain of, the companionship and help of the Saviour Jesus Christ. Yet we may, for many weeks, be confined to a much humbler rôle; if we can get the boys tolerably atten-

tive for part of the time, if we can get Brown to stop that annoying kick just once in the afternoon, if we can prevail on Jones to be a little nicer to Smith before school begins, if we can see *any* signs of *any* growing interest in the lesson we give, the picture or map we bring, the work we propose, that is all at first that we can hope for. That in time (and the true Teacher takes "*a long view*,") will bring all the rest.

TWO SIDES TO CLASS TEACHING.

(2) *The feelings of the Teacher and his scholars are not necessarily similar.* The "uncle" in our anecdote was full of kindly helpfulness and of keen interest, as he recalled his own early experiences with the bicycle, and ran his fingers over the parts of the machine. He did not notice the clock as he expatiated on the technique of mounting and dismounting, of turning and slackening. He was quite happy, and he was talking all the time! Not so the girl. Instead of happy feelings and keen interest, there were feelings indeed, but feelings of boredom, irritation, irking inaction, impatience, disgust. And you could only have told the presence of these feelings by the way in which the girl got herself and her bicycle very quickly far away.

What does the Sunday School Teacher learn here? This—and it needs learning. Do not be misled by the "glow" with which you finish an eloquent narrative lesson or inspiring address. You may be "glowing" yourself, for you have been happily occupied, enthralled, absorbed, spiritually uplifted. What were the feelings of your scholars? Were they as happily occupied, as absorbed, as uplifted? Only loving and careful observation of the *individuals* in our class can tell us the answer to this question.

Because we are giving an inspiring lesson to

all our pupils at once, it does not follow that all are alike learning and being inspired. Class teaching is not necessarily more valuable than Individual Study and Self Teaching: very often it is far less so.

The writer always recollects the close of a particularly successful class lesson given to a large group of children of 12 to 14 years. They had appeared interested, even absorbed; the Teacher had enjoyed herself, and been effective and even eloquent. Yet when she said to the class, "Now I am not going to talk any more—you are going to teach yourselves," the girls broke out into spontaneous clapping.

One last conclusion let us draw from our bicycle anecdote.

NEEDING THE TEACHER.

(3) *The Teacher's help is the more valued as the scholar becomes conscious of his need.* There would come a time inevitably when that girl with the bicycle would really *need* that uncle of hers, with his knowledge and experience. Then she would eagerly listen to explanation and advice, and she would take it because she had herself asked for it.

In using the Self-Teaching method, a Teacher must be ready to keep himself in the background, stand by till needed, and hold in reserve his knowledge and experience because they will be so much more valued when the need for them has been felt.

We Teachers cheapen too much our knowledge and experience. We pour advice upon our scholars *before* they need it, tell them the answers to the questions they are *not* asking, explain continually to them the things they do *not* feel confusing, and then wonder they are not as grateful to us as we expect them to be!

SELF-ABNEGATION FOR THE TEACHER.

It is sometimes said that the Self-Teaching method gives "no scope to the teacher"; and this objection is often raised, we notice, by those teachers who are naturally gifted with eloquence and ready speech; or who enjoy themselves when in command of a large group.

"Scope for the Teacher"! Indeed, the Self-Teaching method gives him more than enough if he is really to help each individual scholar in his class to teach himself. But it is true that the Self-Teaching method makes a high moral demand upon the Teacher's personality. He must be humble enough to learn himself—to put himself to school—to go through his scholars' Self-Teaching Guide beforehand, question by question, as if he were himself a scholar—to work *with* his class as well as *for* them—to throw himself unreservedly into the understanding, and then the answering of any scholar's question—to spare no pains to elucidate any scholar's difficulty or misunderstanding (however trivial and seemingly irrelevant these may appear to be)—to scrap, if necessary, a carefully prepared class lesson—to hold back advice *till it is asked for* and help *till it is needed*—all this implies in a Teacher a very real self-withdrawal and power of unselfishness. It means he does not wish to "shine" of himself, but to stand ready to help in whatever way God may call to him through the individual need of his scholar.

TRUST IN THE SCHOLARS.

The Self-Teaching method, moreover, demands from the Teacher a real trustfulness.

He must be prepared to trust his scholars—to expect from them honesty, interest, intelligence; he will find surprisingly that they tend to have what

he expects. He must trust the source books he puts into their hands; he must believe that the Bible has something of itself to say to the scholar who reads it independently of the Teacher's own eloquence or instruction. The Teacher must trust—if we may say so—GOD. He must believe that every one of his scholars has a soul and an intelligence to which God is speaking, and will speak if he, the Teacher, do but provide an opportunity.

IS SELF-TEACHING TOO INTELLECTUAL?

Now let us deal with some further objections frequently raised to the Self-Teaching Method.

It is said that Self-Teaching is *too intellectual*; it does not appeal to the scholar's spiritual emotions.

Here we must remember that *every idea has its own feeling and tone*. When a scholar appears merely intellectually busy over his Self-Teaching notebook, he is nevertheless *feeling* all the time. He is being attracted to or repelled by the subject matter of his study—the character of Christ; the Gospel Story; the Divine Library of the Bible. Moreover, while Class-Teaching no less than Self-Teaching implies in the scholar throughout the time a “feeling” experience, the feelings entertained during a class lesson are not necessarily those which a Teacher wishes to awaken. To awaken feeling is not enough; *right* feeling must be awakened, and this is as often—perhaps more often—awakened by the method of Self-Teaching and Individual Study as by the method of Class Teaching and collective handling.

The Teacher, while giving a Class Lesson may experience deep and helpful spiritual feelings; the class members (or some of them) may be experiencing feelings of a very different type.

IS SELF-TEACHING TOO SCRAPPY?

It is said that Self-Teaching is *too scrappy and detailed*.

Spiritual experience, like all experience, arises, we would reply, from the scrappy, detailed experiences of every-day life—a word here, an act there, here an inspiration, here a memory. Moreover, a Self-Teaching Guide must not be judged by a single question picked out at random, but by the series of questions considered as a whole. Neither must the Self-Teaching method be judged by an odd two minutes' observation of a scholar at work. What happens in that two minutes must be judged in relation to what has gone before and what will follow it in the way of study and discovery, as well as in relation to the Class Lessons which precede and follow the work, and the corporate worship which introduces and closes the period.

IS SELF-TEACHING MECHANICAL?

It is said that Self-Teaching is *mechanical*.

This objection is best answered by a serious attempt to initiate a class into the Self-Teaching method, and *to continue the work past the initial stages*. The method most certainly does not act mechanically on the scholars. It develops in them, as testimony continues to show, originality, enterprise, independence, and initiative. The Teacher will, moreover, find that he has more than enough to do to keep pace with his quicker scholars, and to give adequate help to his slower pupils; while the injunction at the head of every Self-Teaching Guide, "Ask your Teacher any question you wish," warns the Teacher that lesson preparation must be as serious as before, if this demand is in any way to be met.

For we must nevertheless recognize that, though individual work relieves the Teacher of some strain, it does not relieve him (he would not wish to be relieved) of the necessity for efficiency. If he may be in a position any time to be questioned by the scholar, or appealed to for help about any matter connected with the lesson, if his aim is to be so questioned and appealed to, he must be considerably *au fait* with his subject, and his relationship with his class must be one of friendliness and leadership.

AN INITIAL DIFFICULTY.

One difficulty is often met at the start in Self-Teaching methods.

The object of Self-Teaching is to encourage self-dependence—initiative, independent thought, decreased reliance on the Teacher. Our scholars have not hitherto been trained on those lines; hence the work of developing a habit of "Self-Teaching" must necessarily be hard and slow. They will be merely imitative, fussy, helpless, even distracted to begin with. Yet self-dependence, initiative, independent thought, which will develop later, are essentials in the citizens of a democratic state such as we live in to-day; the need is urgent for an educated democracy which will think for itself, and not fall a thoughtless prey to mob-law or a magnetic leader. These same qualities we have quoted above are essential to any real personal creed and religion. Our scholars must appropriate their own creed and their own religion if either is to be personal and real.

THE TEACHER'S STANDARD OF VALUES.

To sum up, if the object of Self-Teaching be self-dependence on the part of the pupil, the Teacher's standard of values will be inevitably nearly revolutionized. He will judge of his success, not

by his own prowess, his own eloquence and suggestiveness, his own power of holding and keeping the attention of his class, his own enjoyment of his own well-developed and maybe eloquent lesson, but by the signs of spontaneity, and independence, and industry, of thoughtfulness, and responsibility in his individual scholars. Self-Teaching for the scholar, as we have said, demands self-abnegation for the Teacher.

THE PLACE OF THE CLASS LESSON IN INDIVIDUAL WORK.

We have already endeavoured to point out the unsatisfactory character of class teaching, as the main method in religious instruction; yet we do not for a moment suggest that class teaching has had its day.

Self-Teaching and class teaching can go on, and as a rule should go on *side by side*.

There must be in all education (and of necessity in all religious education, we believe), a continued necessity for the Class Lesson, the mass teaching, the collective "handling," the corporate worship and assembling of a number of individuals. Such teaching gives a vision, joy and inspiration which is, we think, unobtainable by merely individual methods. There must be always in education, and of necessity in *religious* education, room for leadership and for the influence of the mature mind on minds less mature.

In facing a fresh class, in opening a new subject or a section of a subject, the Teacher in charge of a Self-Teaching unit will use, as a rule, the collective method—the Class Lesson. (For examples of this see pages 30 and 82.)

Once again, in revision and recapitulation, in drawing together the results of individual studies, in initiating or closing a discussion, the necessity

for the Class Lesson arises once more. (See page 92.)

Further, at any time, an individual difficulty can be explained to *the class as a whole*, or an individual question answered by the same method. (See page 93, etc.)

The Class Lesson must continue to have its place in the Self-Teaching method, but it is used only when wanted. Both collective and individual work should go on side by side.

II.

THE SELF-TEACHING MOVEMENT; ITS HISTORY AND THEORY.

PIONEERS IN THE MOVEMENT.

IT has been an impressive sight during the last few years to see from time to time the large gatherings of Day School Teachers assembled together in northern and southern towns during the winter and in summer schools during the long vacation, to hear all that could be told them as to "Individual Methods," and "Auto-Teaching." For years, the late Dr. Charlotte Mason, in the "Parents' National Educational Union," had been working out her valuable syllabuses for home work with children on individual lines; governesses and parents in numbers had gratefully accepted her help, as well as some Teachers in Elementary and Secondary Schools. Then came Dr. Montessori with her challenge to the usual methods of collective teaching, her insistence on individual development as the essential preliminary to social consciousness, and her provision of courses of individual Self-Teaching apparatus. Overseas, Prof. Dewey has been profoundly modifying the methods of the ordinary kindergarten by his new preaching of the old gospel of "learning by doing"; he had worked out what is often now called "The Project Method" in education, and applied it to such small groups of children as practically to involve individual methods in education. In the same country Miss Parkhurst has been applying for Montessori

principle of organization to the curriculum for older children by means of the Dalton Plan.

SELF-TEACHING IN THE UNIVERSITY AND ELSEWHERE.

All the time, we must remember, Self-Teaching methods have increasingly been in use with adults. In the Universities, for example, it has long been the custom to combine individual and collective methods. Those of us who have been at Oxford or Cambridge can well remember the courses of *lectures* by distinguished professors at which attendance was expected, but, along with these, in reading for a degree, came the *private coachings* where what we had not understood in the lectures heard was explained, where our weak points were discovered and dealt with, where we really worked and had our work continually supervised and corrected—where we, at least, learnt something and remembered what we learnt.

Once again, for some time past, Missionary Circles and Adult Schools have been conducted on the "Study Method"—individuals in the class being given particular points to look up on which they were required to report to the class.

THE MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND. (a) DAY SCHOOLS.

Thus, for a considerable time past, Self-Teaching methods have been "on the earth," and not merely "in the air." In England the movement as regards the Infant Elementary Schools went with a rush. Hundreds of Teachers, after attending short courses of instruction, began work on individual lines with the large elementary classes with which they were grappling every day. Time tables were altered, class rooms rearranged, ideals of discipline and order modified in a surprisingly short time. It has

soon become possible to go into an up-to-date Infant School and find, instead of a Teacher at the black-board demonstrating to a mass of infants sitting in rows, a number of children sitting all ways at small tables (or desks converted into such), moving freely about the room to fetch the material needed, working at different occupations suited to their ability, conversing at will with their fellows about the work which was interesting them all, while the Teacher moved continually but unobtrusively among the children, giving help and guidance wherever needed. Rather more slowly has the Dalton and the Study Method generally laid hold upon the upper classes of the Elementary School; but everywhere "Private Study," "Dalton Methods," etc., are on the increase, and the Self-Teaching movement gathers strength every year.

(b) SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

Now for many years two armies of Teachers have been working side by side for the children of our generation—those in Day School and those in Sunday School. It is, therefore, only natural that movements of educational progress in both these spheres of work shall act and react upon each other. It was, we think, mainly from the Sunday School that the new impetus came when Mr. Archibald began his campaign to turn academic psychology into practical child study. The small class, the study of the individual child, gave a new meaning to education for hundreds of Teachers, not only in the Sunday School, but in the Day School itself. Many a Teacher teaching on the Sunday in a graded Primary Department, and on the Monday in an Elementary School classroom, felt and registered the contrast. As the Primary and Junior Departments became more delightful and more accommodated to the needs of the individual child, so this

joyful human atmosphere became reflected in the Day School routine. "I feel ashamed," said an earnest Day School teacher on a former occasion to the writer, "when I see my children on Sunday *and* on Monday, and think how differently I treat them." Many a Day School has felt the benefit of the Graded Sunday School movement in tone, atmosphere, and choice of curriculum.

Just now, it is the Day School's turn to repay its debt. A great movement has arisen in it, as we have described, and this influence is perforce making itself felt in the Sunday School as well. Auto-Education, Individual Methods, Self-Teaching must find a place in the considerations of those working in the Sunday School. If this method is of avail in general education, it must of necessity have a use in that specialised branch of education which we call religious teaching. If it be profitable in the work of the Day School, it will be of profit also in the Sunday School and Bible Class, and so indeed we are seeing it to be.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-TEACHING.

What is the principle lying behind the Self-Teaching method? It is based upon the well-known fact that each child is an individual, with individual needs and capacities, and an individual rate and course of development. *To treat him rightly you must treat him individually.*

The small classes in the Primary and Junior Departments have indeed prepared us Sunday School Teachers for this. In our story circles we have, at any rate, been able to know and attend to each child, to hear what each child has to say, to come into touch with each one—in short—to individualise. And the child, after his Story Lesson, has expressed himself in his own individual expression work.

FAILURES OF THE CLASS METHOD.

But sometimes, even with a small class and a carefully prepared and told story, we have caught ourselves wondering whether we have individualised enough. Some of our children—one in a class maybe—seem relieved rather than sorry at the close of a story, and only really absorbed over their own expression work. Occasionally, we notice a child inattentive to our narrative because he is concentrating on spelling out the verse printed beneath the picture we are showing. "I know that story, Teacher," sighs a six-year-old, and leaves us damped and puzzled. All this is in the Primary Department; but in the Junior and Intermediate the problem becomes more acute.

The other Sunday, maybe, the story of Jeremiah gripped (as we knew it would) our ten-year-old class—gripped *all but one*. That one was undeniably glad when it was over and eager to have pencil and paper at command or handle Bible or Hymn Book.

Another lesson, perhaps, comes to our recollection—a discussion on a simple Gospel story we had just told—the story of the paralysed man let down through the roof. Questions burst out from the children. Meticulous some of them—"I don't see *how* they could let him down through the roof," said Amy. It was easy, but it took time to satisfy *her*. "Did they hurt him?" asked Ethel, but while she was being answered, Eileen suddenly propounded the tremendous problems, "Was God really angry with the man? Had He really made him ill? Does He make people ill now?"

A glance at Amy's face would have shown you that Eileen's question was not for her; she wriggled restlessly, looked out of the window, and yawned while the Teacher endeavoured to give some little help towards the solution of Eileen's stupendous

difficulties. Ethel, too, looked bored and apathetic. The Teacher closed down the discussion hastily, feeling the necessity of "keeping the class together," yet her closure left Eileen deeply unsatisfied. Her difficulties pressed upon her *as an individual*; (as a matter of fact, her father was a hopeless invalid)—and *as an individual* she should have been helped—but, to be fair, Amy and Ethel needed individual help, too. Meanwhile our Teacher had quite forgotten Jessie, who, at the end of the row, was rocking herself wearily up and down. "Why does she not go on?" she was thinking. "What did the man do *after* he was well? What did the Lord Jesus do *next*? I wish I could find out for myself."

A moment in a Senior Bible Class flashes across the memory of the writer; a question, going right to the roots of our social system, challenging the central truths of the Christian Faith, suddenly leapt out from a keenly listening member. The Teacher glanced at the rest of the class; it was impossible at that moment *to deal adequately with such a question and keep the interest of the class.*

That is the continually recurring problem—known to every thoughtful Teacher—*how to meet the needs of the individual and at the same time to meet the needs of the class.* The *Class method* is bound continually to fail just at this point.

Tastes and temperaments also are disturbing factors. Some of our Seniors, maybe last Sunday, listened eagerly to our Bible reading; some looked as if they would have preferred to read the passage for themselves. A week or so ago, maybe, we, as Teachers, became definitely conscious that half our class was still deeply absorbed in the lesson course on which we had embarked, and that the other half had now exhausted their interest in it, and was ready for

something fresh. Moreover, out of our interested "half," two, we noticed, were beginning to lose keenness because they could learn far more quickly what we had been teaching them, and one other at least was getting confused and discouraged because we were going too fast!

INDIVIDUAL METHODS.

How can we meet these individual needs? Surely, only by individual methods.

"I don't mind eighty in a class," said a Teacher to the writer on one occasion, "*as long as they are all alike.*" But the fundamental fact is that they are not. Let us frankly acknowledge that the members of our class are all individuals, with different physical constitutions, temperaments, likes, dislikes, difficulties, questions, rates of apprehension. Let us plan how to treat them individually.

Moreover, our aim in religious teaching is an individual one; it is individual spiritual response and growth, individual prayer and recollection that we are working for—an individual habit of thought we want to develop. We are seeking to awaken nothing less than a profound individual interest in Jesus Christ. This may grow out from a humble origin; a scholar's interest in a summer camp and Abraham's tent may lead to an interest in the Bible as a Divine Library, and thus finally to an interest in the Gospels as the guide of Life.

We must plan to start from the individual interests of our scholars and lead from these to the highest interest of all.

REVERIES, DAY DREAMS, AND INATTENTION.

Let us consider another point in the psychology of Self-Teaching.

Anyone who has watched a competent Teacher teaching any class of children for, let us say, a

period of half an hour, cannot but have observed lapses of attention on the part of nearly all the scholars. Such lapses are evident either in fidgetiness and attempts at distraction or conversation, or in that wandering or vacant look in a child's eyes that tells of a mental excursion in some direction other than that prescribed by the Teacher's plan. Even when a child seems to be absorbed in a Teacher's vivid narrative *he is not nearly so absorbed as we give him credit for being*. Anyone who has honestly tried to recall what happened in his own mind during a lecture, sermon, or address at which he has been present will find himself compelled to recognize that for a certain proportion of the time—even during the most thrilling lecture, or sermon, or address, *he was not attending to it at all*. A pointed question, "Tell us what was said," would bring, as we know, a disappointing response. *While someone else is talking, even when he is talking to us, attention tends to wander*. If we were talking ourselves, or even preparing to give such an address, we should find it much easier to avoid such lapses. To use the familiar jargon of common speech, it is by *doing* rather than *listening*, that we mostly learn. *Mostly*, that is, for we must recognize differences of temperament. There are those of a poetical, or scholarly, or reflective disposition who would say that they learn much from other people's talking, and that they can do with a great deal of it. This disposition, we would urge, is comparatively rare—at any rate, with children. Most children and young people would rather *do* than watch or hear the Teacher's *doing*. They would rather teach themselves than be merely taught.

Moreover, these lapses of attention to which we have alluded are frequently due to the necessary conditions of class teaching. The slow child is

mystified and confused, finds it an effort to keep up with the Teacher, and his attention wanders in consequence. The quick child assimilates quickly, is voracious of information, and, not getting it as quickly as he wants it, becomes bored; his attention, whether expressed by "fidgets" or "day-dreams," wanders, too. The average child (only there is not one), is slow on some points, quick on others, and his attention may and does wander at any unforeseen moment.

Again, as we have said, temperaments of children differ, as well as their powers of intellectual assimilation. Some children want to ask "problem" questions arising out of the story or lesson; some want merely to get information as to some detail in the story that attracts their attention; some children do not want to ask anything at all—they may even actively hate a discussion thrust on them by the initiative of another child or the zeal of their own Teacher. *Every scholar must have an opportunity of asking questions of his Teacher or exchanging views with him when he wants to*, otherwise his interest and attention tend to dissipate. He ceases to concentrate.

Now, the aim of the Class Lesson, of "the address to the mass," is to arouse interest, and awake thought. But, as we have realized for some time in our Graded Sunday Schools, this is not enough. We want to use that interest when once aroused. We want to do something to secure that the active, easily wandering minds of our scholars shall *continue to be interested* in the subject of our lesson; we desire to find something which ensures that the scholars' thoughts shall *continue to hover over* the lesson topic, to ponder on its truth, to see it from different angles, to reflect upon it, in short, to *meditate*. *Interest must lead to meditation.*

MEDITATION AND SELF-TEACHING.

Many adults can meditate in some restful attitude, kneeling or sitting, with hands inactive. Not so the child or growing boy or girl; yet these, too, are capable of meditation. Work must be provided for them, on which they will willingly engage (for meditation cannot of its essence, be forced), and work, moreover, that will in the doing, cause the scholar's thoughts to circle round the story he has been hearing, the hero he has been admiring, the character or situation he has been beginning to analyse under the Teacher's guidance. Thus we follow our Class Lesson in the Graded Sunday School Programme by the Scholar's *Expression*, which might be better called his *Meditation*.

The Scholar's Self-Teaching Work is, in essence, a prolonged Meditation. During this work, the scholar is reflecting and pondering, getting more out of the lesson he has had, turning it over in his mind, learning to see it from different angles. During this work, he begins (as the Teachers so often tell us) to ask questions, to express himself spontaneously.

QUESTIONS.

Indeed, a Self-Teaching class usually goes through three stages in the matter of *Questions*. At first there are many questions, as there are many misunderstandings over a new method and a new apparatus. The scholars maybe have not been accustomed to initiative and independent thought; they will be fussy, helpless, to begin with, and the Teacher, if not on his guard, may easily catch the "distraction" of his class; so many people to attend to, and all seemingly at once!

Then comes the next stage; the scholars settle into work, and ask no questions at all.

Then comes the third stage; individuals, one

by one, seem to awake, to think, to reflect, and finally come the really thoughtful interesting questions which are the Teacher's exceeding great reward.

THE HABIT OF CONCENTRATION.

Such questions are symptoms. Meditation has begun, and with it the habit of concentration. Surely this is what is so badly needed in our noisy modern world. This habit (spoken of very illuminatingly by Dr. Montessori) means a power to become absorbed in a matter *whatever is happening around*. We speak often to our scholars of prayer and religious study, forgetful of the fact that, for most of them, owing to the crowded conditions of town life, such prayer and study must be done privately while other people are engaged in other things.

It is very wonderful to see the individual concentration of a boy or girl, or even of a five-year-old, in a Self-Teaching Day School Class, oblivious of the sounds and movements around him or in the streets outside.

If, then, we can in Sunday School, develop a habit of individual concentration that is independent of surrounding noise, or movement, or distraction, we shall have laid a valuable foundation for the spiritual practices of prayer and meditation.

III.—THE METHOD IN PRACTICE.

ITS BEGINNINGS.

THE Self-Teaching Method is an individual method, and therefore will begin *individually*.

A Sunday School teacher in charge of a small group of six-year-olds will have been accustomed for some time to give her children whatever *individual choice of expression work material* is possible under her conditions: *e.g.*, free drawing with pencil or chalk, free paper cutting, scrap book work, etc.

PICTURE STUDY.

She will also have gradually provided herself with a Portfolio of Pictures, which she has collected from time to time, from any and every source, pasted on stout sheets of brown paper (to allow a margin for the children's fingers when handling), named and numbered and enclosed in a cardboard case.

TEACHER'S
PICTURE
PORTFOLIO

Date begun.....
Date ended.....
Name

Outside

1

Picture

This is a picture
of the Lord
Jesus healing
a blind man

Inside

Any child, therefore, who has finished his "Expression Work" before the others, or who seems disinclined to do it, will have got into the habit of investigating the Picture Portfolio, picking out for study any picture which appeals to him, and talking it over with the Teacher, or asking her any question he may wish about it, which she may answer at lesser or greater length according to circumstances.

[**Note.**—We append here some notes showing how "Individual Picture Lessons" may be given. (Some teachers find it useful to have their Picture Portfolio with them in the Assembly Room, and to occupy time with it before school opens.)]

INDIVIDUAL PICTURE LESSONS.

NO. 1.—ON A PICTURE OF THE ANNUNCIATION.

Here is a picture of a mother—Mother Mary. Let children notice her arms are empty—no little baby. Would she like a little baby? God is going to send her the most wonderful Baby in all the world—the little Baby Jesus. Let the child find the Angel. The Heavenly Father has sent the Angel to tell Mary. The Angel is saying, "The little Lord Jesus is coming. He is coming to be your little Baby." See how Mary is listening! Show (with actions) how she is putting her hands. Tell Mary's answer, "I am so happy." Then she sang a glad song.

NO. 2.—ON A PICTURE OF THE NATIVITY.

Here is a picture of the "little Lord Jesus when He was quite tiny." Let the child find the tiny Baby—all wrapped up in bed—notice Mother Mary, lying by Him—holding Him so carefully—her hand under the little back (imitate with actions). Where is she looking? Can you see how she is

smiling at Him? Notice the kind nurse helping to hold the Baby Jesus—the bed close by, the little Lord Jesus is lying on the hay—St. Joseph, head on hand, asleep, tired with watching—the sheep come to see the little Lord Jesus—a goat, too—two men come to see, the angels (let the child point to each)—notice their wings and praying hands (imitate with actions). What are they doing? Thanking the Heavenly Father for sending the Baby Jesus—singing glad carols. Shall we say our carol? Repeat carol, “Away in the manger,” verse 1 (Carey Bonner Child Songs), once or twice, letting the child point to the Lord Jesus once again.

NO. 3.—ON A PICTURE OF JESUS CHRIST HEALING THE SICK.

Look at this man; he is not strong yet—he is in bed. Let the child find the sick man and Our Lord—tell how Our Lord said to him, “Stand up!” and the man stood up straight and strong. God had made him well again. How glad he was! Let child stand up like man and say, hymn, “For all the strength we have” (National Society’s Graded Hymn Book). Then let the child find the Lord Jesus and the other sick people who have come to him: sick girl, lame man with crutch, boy with aching head, child with eyes bandaged, etc. Tell in the case of each how He looked lovingly on them and said, “Be well again.” Tell in the case of each what happened—*e.g.*, the girl got up so gladly and went home with her mother. Little child could take off the bandage and see. Boy’s head ached no more. Lame man dropped his crutch. All glad, for God had made them well. (Let the child stand as before, and repeat verse.)

BIBLE STORY CARDS.

Now an alternative occupation may be introduced to any child who the teacher thinks is ready for it.

"Would you like to read the story of this picture?" she will say, or "Would you like to read the story we have had to-day?" She then introduces the child to the use of a *Bible Story Card*—a stiff piece of cardboard, with a picture on one side, a number in the corner, and on the reverse side a complete Bible Story printed in large type and taken, with any omissions suitable, direct from the beautiful Authorized Version.

(In some cases the child is given the Bible Story Card to take home as a gift.) He studies the picture on one side, and then, turning it over, tries to read the story of the picture which is printed on the other side in big letters. The child (while the rest of the class is going on with their expression work) tries to read the story (helped by the picture on the other side); he reads it to *himself* or with the Teacher, according to his individual need or taste; then draws a picture of it on his paper or board. If time allows, he exchanges his card for another. Each card in the series is numbered clearly in the left hand corner, so that the Teacher may note in her register against any child's name the number of the story read and the picture studied. A quick child may Sunday by Sunday read many stories from the series; a slower child will read fewer. The Teacher can apportion the work to individual needs, and the child thus gets his first contact with the text of the Bible.

REGISTERS OF WORK.

Here is an example of a Teacher's register page which shows the work done by each child in a month, with the numbers of the cards noted down:

BIBLE STORY CARDS, NOS. 1 to 16.

January	1	8	15	22	29
Edith Atkins ...	—	1, 2	3, 4	5, 6	7, 8
Edgar Adkins ...	—	—	1	2	3
Winnie Coombs	—	—	—	1, 2	3, 4
Dora Fisk ...	—	—	—	1	2
Reggie Garnett	1, 2,	3, 4,	5, 6, 7	8, 9, 10,	12, 13, 14,
				11	15, 16*
Fred Huson ...	1	2, 3,	4, 5	6, 7	8, 9
Esther Jones ...	—	—	1, 2	3, 4	5, 6
Willie Jones ...	—	—	—	1	2

*Set completed.

Some teachers may prefer to show on their register page the number of cards each scholar has used, thus:—

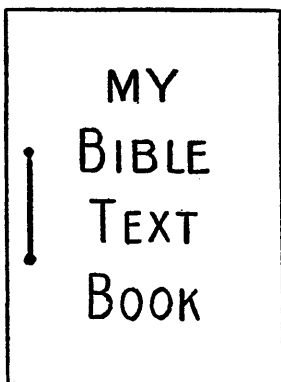
BIBLE STORY CARDS. SERIES 1.

No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
E. Atkins ...	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ed. Atkins ...	/	/	/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
W. Coombs...	/	/	/	/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
D. Fisk ...	/	/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R. Garnett ...	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
F. Huson ...	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
E. Jones ...	/	/	/	/	/	/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
W. Jones ...	/	/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

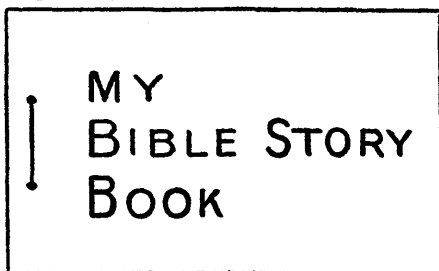
QUICK SCHOLARS AND WHAT TO DO WITH THEM.

What is to happen to the quick scholar—Reggie Garnett—who has gone through his first set of study cards while Winnie Jones has read but two, and Fred Huson had only read one? Several alternative plans may be suggested to be used at the teacher's discretion.

1. Reggie may be given a sheet of lined paper and shown how to make it into a small book. On each page of this he can, Sunday by Sunday, print a single text or sentence from each of the stories he has read; ornamenting them and the cover with coloured chalks, *e.g.*:—



2. If he can write fairly easily, he may instead of this be given a lined note book and copy into it the stories he likes best from the study cards he has used, drawing an illustration to each story, and writing on the cover:



3. He may be promoted to be a "Class Helper," for a certain number of Sundays (or for one Sunday), and be given charge of one of his class mates; *e.g.*, he may sit next to Willie Jones, and read his study card with him if he is willing, or hear Willie read the story aloud.

4. He may begin another series of Bible Study Cards, and go ahead by himself on individual lines.

SETS OF APPARATUS.

How many sets of apparatus will be required by the Teacher? It will usually be found that one set of Study Cards will be sufficient for a class of twelve or twenty children provided the work is begun *individually*, as we have suggested. It is unlikely that more than one or two children (for the scholars can easily work in pairs, sharing the same card, if necessary), will be wanting the same card at the same moment. If this be so, the children may be given a card in the series which is not the next in rotation, a series of Bible story cards usually being graded so as to allow of this being done without confusion. Indeed, some Teachers prefer to disregard the order of the cards in each set (it being generally understood that the series in any set are of approximately equal difficulty), and distribute the cards to all children in their class each Sunday, thus giving each child a different card and asking him to read it, draw a picture to illustrate it, and copy out any verse he likes from it. With this plan in use a quick child may be given a fresh card as soon as he needs it.

Now comes a further stage.

BIBLE STUDY CARDS.

At eight or nine years, the child can read with greater fluency; he can learn to find and read the story of the picture for himself, and he can attack simple problem questions on what he has read. The Teacher will now distribute to his class a series of numbered *Bible Study Cards*. Each child will find on his card a picture on the one side, and a series of four or five teaching questions on the other. He studies the picture and turns to read and choose his questions. "Find this story and read it," will probably be the first, with appropriate directions as to the Book of the Bible, the chapter and verse.

Perhaps it is a series of Study Cards on the Gospels with which the class is engaged. The Teacher will have by him a few little *halfpenny* "Gospels"—each Gospel bound in a different colour and all in large print. The child will choose the Gospel required, and find and read the story, as directed by his card. *This is his next contact with the Bible narrative.*

[**Note.**—This use of *separate Gospels* by the child is not unimportant. The little books are much more easily handled by young children, the print is larger, and it is far easier to find the place than in a complete Bible, authorized or revised. Hence their evident popularity with the scholars. Moreover the children thus get quite used to the idea that there are available four story books concerning the life and words of the Lord Jesus, written by different writers. Thus they are armed beforehand against any alarms that might be caused by discrepancies between the various evangelistic narratives.]

Having found and read his Gospel Story, the child may then proceed to the next question on his Bible Study Card: perhaps this question is the printing of some particular verse in the story on a sheet of paper; then its memorising; then an "imaginative" question—"Draw this story or write it in your own words." The quick child will cover all the questions on his card before he exchanges it for a fresh one; the slower child will attempt but one or two.

Each question when done will be shown to the Teacher, who will at any time use his discretion as to giving a Class Lesson on any point that arises or he may take the cards in turn and tell the story of each.

Throughout the lesson period the Teacher will be continually employed with individual children; helping one to find his place in the Gospel, hearing another read the story or repeat a verse, explaining to another a difficult word or idea, noting down in his register what cards have been attempted by each child, and placing each child's completed sheet of paper in the individual portfolio which bears his name, and which will be "on show" at the annual Parent's Party of the Sunday School.

	My
	PORTFOLIO
	Name
	
	Class
	
	Department
	

Such Study Cards will increase in difficulty as the child progresses. A series which has proved very attractive is on "Famous Gospel Pictures," and another very popular one is on "Places in the Holy Land."

[We append an example of an Introductory Class Lesson to a Series of Study Cards on "Gospel Pictures."]

AN INTRODUCTORY CLASS LESSON.

“ Who likes to look at a picture? Where have you seen pictures? Encourage the children to talk about the pictures they have seen—at home—at Day School—Sunday School, in Church, in books. Even tiny children like picture books. Why? They can tell the stories in the book long before they can read it just by looking at the pictures in it. Who has a picture book at home? etc. Then go on to tell how long ago many grown-up people could not read the wonderful Bible Stories for themselves, and so men painted beautiful pictures of these stories on the walls of the Churches for all to see. The pictures they most often painted were of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Here the Teacher may hold up some of the pictures, explaining that each picture has its own number, telling briefly the subject. “ Here is a picture of the Angel telling Mother Mary she will have a little Baby, and that Baby will be the Lord Jesus Christ.” “ Here is Mother Mary holding the Lord Jesus in her arms.” “ Here is the Baby Jesus in the Temple Church—an old man is holding Him.” “ Here is the Lord Jesus with His friends, etc.” Then go on to tell something of the artists who painted these pictures on the walls of the great dark churches. Compare with any experiences of painting or chalking pictures which the children may have had themselves.

Tell of the careful training of the artists, even from childhood—to hold a pencil steady, mix colours rightly, paint carefully. Speak of Fra Angelico, the Angel Brother, who always prayed to God upon his knees to guide his mind and hand before he dipped his brush into the colour, and began to paint. Tell how the people came to watch the artists painting on the church walls, standing high up on their scaffolds or in their own houses, and how glad the people were when the pictures

were finished, and they could come in and look at them when they wished. "Why, there is Mother Mary, they would say." See how beautiful she is, and the painter has painted a golden sun behind her head to show that she was full of the love of God." "There is the Baby Jesus, and round His head is a still more glorious sun, for He was the little 'King of Love.'" (The Teacher may thus try to prepare the ideas lying behind symbolic painting, the use of haloes, etc.) Sometimes people were so pleased with a beautiful picture when it was painted that they carried it on high through the streets of the town, before they put it up in the great Church for all to see.*

We are going to look at some photographs of these pictures to-day. There is one on each of these cards, and first we must look at them carefully to see *all* the artist has tried to paint. Then we can turn them over, and the picture cards will begin to talk to us and show us how to teach ourselves more about the pictures.

Show a *Picture Study Card*, and let the children see the big print on the back of the picture. "Shall I tell you what the Picture Card is telling us to do as I read it? First, it tells me something to do about the picture."

(I) "**Listen to or read the Story of this Picture.**" "Would you not like to read it for yourselves? But how shall we find the story? Look, the card tells us."

"Luke ii. 4-20." It says: "Luke is the name of a friend of the Lord Jesus who wrote a book of stories about Him." Here it is; (show a penny copy of the Gospel of St. Luke, and let the children see its title, and the big print inside, with the chapters

* See stories of Fra Angelico and Cimabue in "New Stories for the Sunday Kindergarten."

and verses). "We must find the second chapter and the fourth verse. Then show the place and let a child find it." Now we must put away the Gospel of St. Luke. But the Study Card has not finished teaching us. It says:—

(2) **"What can you see in this picture? Is there anything you like very much in it? Write your answer."** What shall we want to do before we can answer that question? Look well at the picture, find a pencil and a sheet of paper, and then write. But the Study Card has another thing to tell us; this time we are to print. Who prints at school? See what the card says:—

(3) **"Print and Learn**

THE ANGEL'S SONG.

**Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace,
goodwill towards men."**

So, when you have printed it on your paper, you must learn it by heart, so that you can say it to me or to anyone else. What next does the card say?

(4) **"Draw your own picture of this story."** So we must have coloured chalks for that, draw very carefully, like the artists used to do on the church walls, and put a frame round our picture when we have finished it.

Now the card tells us to get the Gospel of St. Luke again:—

(5) **"Find in your Bible the verse you have learnt."**

Now see the very last thing our Study Card tells us to do.

(6) **"Copy this picture or write its story in your own words."** Perhaps only some of us will reach to the end of our cards to-day. If we do we can have another card to study. Let us begin."

(Then give out the cards, pencils, and paper, etc., and let each child head his paper with his name and the number of his card.)

SELF-TEACHING GUIDES.

The next stage in Self-Teaching apparatus is reached when the scholars can read and write with pleasure to himself, and can be given a list of study questions in the form of a *Self-Teaching Guide*.

Let us watch a class at such work, visiting first two lively Sunday School classes of ten-year-old boys. They march briskly to their room after the opening religious exercises, and rig up in a short space of time a couple of trestle tables.

The young Teachers in charge of each group seat themselves at the head of the tables, the two class monitors sitting at the opposite ends. The class monitors produce the apparatus bags and give out notebooks and pencils to each boy, while placing in the middle of each table a bright coloured Self-Teaching portfolio envelope containing maps, pictures, plans, photographs, and sketches, together with a number of Bibles, and the text book for the course. The boys then open their notebooks and begin to work in pairs.

Let us look over their shoulders and see what each is doing. They are studying the life of Abraham.

That boy at the corner of the table is reaching out for a Bible, preparatory to reading a passage in it; the little leaflet in his notebook—the Self-Teaching Guide—has directed him what to find.

The boy next to him has already read his passage, and is copying out in good print a verse from the passage; his "Guide" has again told him to do this, and afterwards to learnt it by heart.

The next scholar is studying a picture of Abraham's land; his neighbour is drawing a map of the

place; another boy is sketching Abraham's tent from an illustration taken from the portfolio; another is drawing an imaginative picture of a scene in Abraham's life, while a quick scholar on the other side of the table has reached a difficult question, which is evidently causing him much thought. Let us read the question.

"Do you think God told Abraham to kill his son? What would Jesus Christ have said?" All are at work in the class, and after the start all are at different stages.

Each boy, when he has finished one unit of work, draws a line across the page of his notebook and signs his initials.

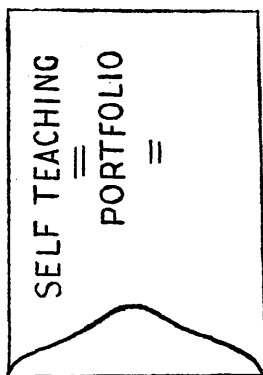
If the Teacher is free, the boy takes it at once to the Teacher, who looks over the work, explains anything not understood, comments on any mistake or omission, gives in fact, an *individual lesson* (even if only of one minute's duration) *suited to the scholar's needs*, and finally puts his initials to the work done, and the boy continues.

"What about the class lessons?" we ask one of the Teachers.

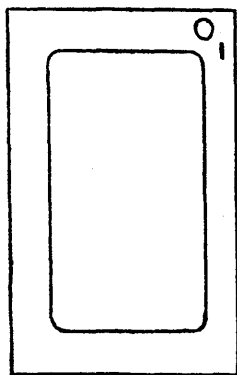
"Oh," he answers, "I give one after about ten units' work as a rule. Once a month, perhaps. Any time I think good I give one, even if only of a few minutes' duration. My quick boys do all the questions in the Guide, and after that they either start on a new Guide, which they keep going at the same time (a sharp boy can easily keep two Guides going at once), or take a book out of the Class Library, or make an anthology of favourite hymns or texts, or they are promoted to be a 'Helper,' and assist one of the other scholars. The boys' books will be on show at the Annual Parents' Sunday School evening," he added; "they much enjoy seeing the work."

PICTURE PORTFOLIOS.

A word or two about apparatus may here be useful, first as to pictures, maps, books, etc. The scholar's work, it will be found, requires the use of these, which (prepared specially in sets for use with the "scholar's guides"), may be mounted on sheets of brown paper, lettered to correspond with the "guides" (in order to avoid confusion), and fastened with a movable clip, or else they can be kept in the "portfolios" provided. These can be placed on the window ledge or table, and the scholars can come out and help themselves to them as they need. If the school seating does not admit of this movement, then it is well to choose certain scholars up and down the room who can act as "picture guardians," keeping the pictures, maps, etc., on their desk in front of them, supplying them to the scholars near, and being responsible for collecting them at the end. As to the number of sets needed, it is found that one "picture guardian" can easily and conveniently "feed" his own row and



Back
of envelope



Front
Showing picture &
number of Series

the row back and front of him; or—to put it in a different way—one set will suffice ten to fifteen scholars. (When a sketch or map is very much in demand on a particular day, the teacher may sometimes put up a blackboard copy *pro tem.*)

INITIALLING THE WORK.

Now as to the scholars' guides. Each scholar must be provided with a notebook for his work and with a "guide" for his own Self-Teaching. These "scholars' guides" take the form of cards or leaflets headed with the *subject* which the scholar is going to study. A folding card might be preferable, but leaflets are cheaper, and most Teachers have begun work with those. We need (and these are being produced), "guides" on varied subjects, and in different grades, working out study courses on Old and New Testament, Church History, Christian Ethics, Missions, etc.

Each scholar is then given his own *Self-Teaching guide*, and the first thing he does is to write in his notebook his name and the date on which he begins the work. He will then study the two general directions at the beginning of the guide.

1. Ask your Teacher any question you wish; also for pictures, maps, books, etc.

2. Put your initials in left hand margin (of the "guide") as you finish each piece of work. Show each piece of work, when you have done it, to your Teacher, who will then initial it in right-hand margin.

Let us deal first with direction No. 2. The Teacher may well introduce the "guides" to the scholars with some discussion on the meaning of "Self-Teaching"; even the eight-year-olds, if the experiment be tried with them, are keenly interested in this idea. The scholars will notice the assignments of work in the "guides," numbered in order,

and the two margins, left and right, for the initials of scholar and Teacher. This "initialling" must be discussed with the scholars (at any rate, with the younger ones, and during the earlier stages), *e.g.*, what "to finish" a piece of work really means; what "initialling" actually implies on the part of both scholar and teacher—the personal responsibility involved, and so on. The youngest children often prefer to put coloured "stars" instead of initials, and the teacher will follow suit. At the beginning, with a class unaccustomed to independent work or to showing initiative, it will often be necessary for the teacher to initial *each* assignment of work after completion—at any rate, in the case of the more timid scholars, who fear to work "on their own," and need at the outset much encouragement. This initialling must necessarily be less frequent with a large class, and with a small class it will be found better eventually to initial after two, three, four, or five items of work have been completed. *Most of the work should be initialled in class*, the scholars coming up to the teacher's desk if furniture allows (the change and movement is excellent for them), or the teacher going round the class, as required, if the desks do not permit of the scholars moving in and out. As soon as a scholar has completely finished any "guide" at which he is working, he will insert his answers in his "scholars' guide" case—a cardboard or paper case in which he will keep all his initialled and completed work as visible signs and tokens of the work he has done.

SCHOLARS' QUESTIONS.

Let us now consider the second *direction*, "Ask your Teacher," etc. Some discussion, at any rate in the earlier stages, is needed on this; it is helpful to put the scholars on their mettle to ask no ques-

SELF-TEACHING GUIDE CASE

Scholar's name

tion of Teacher which their "Self-Teaching guide" could answer for them. Indeed, it will be found that unnecessary and thoughtless questions steadily diminish and are replaced by those rare and thoughtful inquiries which are a Teacher's opportunity and reward.

A few words may be said on the general subject of scholar's questions *à propos* of the injunction at the head of a Self-Teaching guide, "Ask your Teacher any question you wish."

Such questions will vary in frequency and importance. How should they be answered? Sometimes a scholar's question may be an *unnecessary* one. "Am I to read chapter v., verse 15, out of the Bible?" asks a scholar, when "Read Luke v., verse 15," is clearly printed on his guide. A suggestion given with a touch of humour that it is the Guide he should question, and that his answer is within a few inches of his nose may meet the case when the question proceeds from an *over-dependence* or a *desire to avoid trouble*.

Sometimes even an apparently unnecessary question may proceed from *timidity* on the scholar's part; he really knows the answer to the question he is asking, but is not quite sure. He needs corroboration, encouragement, to be sure he is on the right lines. A Teacher's "Yes, that's right," may give this.

Sometimes the scholar's question can be answered by *a little more knowledge* on the part of the scholar. Let the Teacher in this case avoid giving the knowledge on his own authority, but rather put the scholar in the way of obtaining it for himself. "I think picture No. — in the portfolio will help you there," or "Look at this map," or "You will find something about it in this book," or "Try question No. — first, and then come back to this." The Teacher must all the way through be striving to awake in every scholar a desire to *find out for himself*; to use his own powers rather than to cultivate a spirit of childish dependence on the Teacher.

Sometimes the scholar's question overtakes the Teacher's knowledge; here absolute honesty is what counts in the end.

"You have asked me a difficult question, and I don't know the answer. I will look it up and tell you next time."

Sometimes an answer must be given to a *problem question*, for example, on the value of *justice* or *pain* or *death* or *sorrow*. "You have asked me a most important question. I don't know the answer. I wish I did. Perhaps the time will come when you and I will get to know the answer to that question." Sometimes the Teacher must say, "No one knows the answer to that question. Perhaps when we become more like the Lord Jesus Christ we shall understand and know." Sometimes the Teacher must say, "Your question is a big one, and there is not enough time to answer

it now. We will have a lesson on it next week or to-day fortnight." Sometimes the Teacher may ask another scholar to answer a question put, or ask another scholar to give help about this particular point.

It is useful for the Teacher to start a "question box," and keep the questions till a whole lesson can be devoted to them, or a new lesson course based upon them.

Even if a scholar should on occasion put questions "for the sake of asking them," it is best not to recognize this, but to answer seriously and politely, and strive in other ways to alter the relationship between scholar and Teacher so as to do away with the desire of causing annoyance which the questions cover.

WORK ASSIGNMENTS AND COLLECTIVE LESSONS.

Now let us consider the assignments of work, and we will, by way of illustration, print part of the first page of a "scholar's guide," the first in a series on Old Testament Heroes, printed by permission from the National Society's Self-Teaching Series.

SELF-TEACHING

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Date began *Date ended*

Subject: CHARACTERS AND SCENES FROM HEBREW STORY, I.
Abraham to Joseph.

Scholar's Name

1. Ask your teacher any question you wish; also for pictures, maps, books, etc.
2. Put your initials in left-hand margin as you finish each piece of work. Show each piece of work, when you have done it, to your teacher, who will then initial in right-hand margin.

Scholar's
Initials.

Trainer's
Initials.

1. *Text-book*, pp. 6, 7, 8. ABRAHAM, THE SHEPHERD CHIEF
2. Read Gen. xi. 31; xii. 1-10; xiii. 2...
3. Draw map of Chaldea (Babylonia), and insert *Ur—Abraham's* birthplace
4. Sketch a shepherd's tent and water-skin
5. Copy Gen. xii. 1 and 2... ..
6. Tell all you can about the way in which *Abraham's* people lived and travelled
7. What might lead to the separation of this huge family? (Write down your ideas)
8. Read Gen. xiii. 5-12
9. Copy Gen. xiii. 8
10. Draw a map or picture to illustrate this story
11. What do you think Lot ought to have done when *Abraham* gave him the first choice of pasture?
12. Read *Abraham's* comforting vision, Gen. xiii. 14-18, and print Gen. xiii. 16
13. *Text-book*, pp. 10, 11. HOW ABRAHAM LEARNT MORE ABOUT THE PROMISE ...
14. Write the story of an imaginary day in the life of the boy *Isaac*
15. Draw a picture to illustrate the story told in Gen. xviii. 1-16
16. Read Gen. xxii. 1-14
17. The writer of the story thought God told *Abraham* to kill his son and then to kill a ram as an act of worship. What do you think? What do you think Our Lord would have said? ...
18. Copy any verse from Psa. li. which reminds you of this story
19. Read Gen. xxiii.
20. Turn this passage into a play, writing out the parts. *Get it acted if you can*
21. Study a picture of Hebron and the Cave of Machpelah
22. Calculate the price (a shekel=2s. 9d.)
23. Draw a map showing the site of the Cave of Machpelah
24. Read Gen. xxiv. 1-12

It will be noticed that Nos. 1 and 13 of the work assignments are printed in italics and heavy type. These represent collective *lessons*, which the teacher may give to the *class as a whole*, using the text book as lesson material. Alternatively, the collective lesson may be given to *any section of the class* who have arrived at the necessary stage, or, to *individuals*—perhaps to those specially quick or especially slow, or to scholars returning after absence from school. As a still further variation of method, where a supply of individual textbooks can be supplied for use by the class, the assignment of pages in the text-book may be *read and studied by the individual himself*. (One text book to every ten or a dozen scholars will probably prove sufficient. In some cases, especially where the lesson is treated in the text book in the form of a vivid narrative, the assignment *may be read to the class by the teacher*.)

EXPERIMENTS WITH A YOUNG CLASS IN SELF-TEACHING WORK.

At what age is it possible to begin such a Self-Teaching guide as we have been discussing? Not, of course, till a child can read and write with some facility, or, at any rate, pleasure. The youngest children with which the method of self-teaching in Religious Teaching has been tried on these lines, to our knowledge, was a class of boys and girls seven to nine years, from a very progressive and up-to-date preparatory Day School, where enlightened methods of education had been long in use, and where much freedom is encouraged in the scholars. The class numbered nineteen in all. They were told they were to begin a series of lessons on Abraham, and were asked to bring their own Bibles.

The Teacher opened by a brief class lesson (not
D

more than five minutes), taking the children on an imaginary visit into the land of Abraham, and brought them by a short, vivid narrative face to face with the old shepherd chief, sitting in the tent "in the cool of the day." Having thus aroused interest to discover his life story, she proposed to the children that they should find this out for themselves, rather than have it merely told to them. They agreed to the project with alacrity, and "Scholar's Guides" (as already printed on page 42) were distributed, together with notebooks, the Teacher keeping charge of the portfolio of pictures and maps.

The children worked with a will, coming out of their seats whenever they needed a map or picture, or to ask some question. The first two days they were "fussy"—then settled in as to a routine.

As some of the younger children read only with difficulty, the Teacher offered to read any Bible passage to any child who wished, and to help when required in finding places. Some of the children elected to have the passage read to them by the Teacher, while others as stoutly preferred to read to themselves. Gradually those who preferred to read the Bible passage to themselves increased; it was noticeable that children often offered to read to each other in the case of slow readers or "absentees," who wished to "catch up" to the rest. The class fell naturally into two almost equal subdivisions as the work went on; each of these sets had at two different times the Class Lesson No. 13 given to it by the teacher, and all worked steadily ahead from week to week (one lesson a week for thirty-five minutes was the time given to Scripture), until in nine weeks (the end of term), Assignments 1 to 21 had been completed.

Those children who had earliest reached No. 20 used to gather in groups, sitting on the floor,

and learning the play they had written out (see question 20 given above), while the others worked on. The children became during term increasingly keen over their work, and proud of their notebooks. Script writing had been previously familiar to them, so printing text was easy and delightful. The free illustrations were taken most seriously, and these favoured children were fortunate enough to possess coloured chalks. Question 14 caused some searching of heart (it was in effect a revision of all the previous work), but eventually, thoughtful, though necessarily brief, answers were produced.

Questions 11 and 17 provoked the first conspicuous signs of independent thought and originality and discussion.

As regards the question of Lot's choice of the pasture, public opinion in the class tended, with one exception, towards his condemnation. "I think Lot should have said, 'You take the first choice, because you are the eldest,'" wrote one child. Abraham, the children felt, should have been given the first choice, "Because he was the greater man," or "Because he asked him first." The exception above mentioned (a seven-year-old boy) adhered to his opinion, had he been in Lot's place *he* should have taken the first place. "J., how *could* you?" exclaimed the other children. But J. was unmoved, "I should have taken the first choice," he said.

The well-known problem of the sacrifice of Isaac provoked such varied answers as: "I think God told Abraham to offer up a ram" (boy of eight years); "It was done to test Abraham's faith, and God saw that Abraham loved Him, and he had not to kill his boy" (girl, eight years); "I think God was doing it to see if Abraham really trusted him, and he did" (girl, nine years); "I think our Christ (would have) said it would have

been better to offer up the ram " (boy, nine years); " I think if God did say that, it would have been very cruel; I am sure God never said such a cruel thing " (girl, eight years).

Other answers were:—

1. I don't think God did tell Abraham to kill his son Isaac. I think our Lord would have said, " Don't kill Isaac." (9 years).

2. I think Abraham *thought* God said he was to kill his son. I am sure God would not have asked him to do that, and I think Jesus would have said not to do it. (9½ years).

3. I think Abraham thought God said he was to kill his son, but I think our Lord would have told him not to kill his son. (9 years).

4. I do not think God told Abraham to kill his son. I do not think our Lord would have said, " Abram, kill your son." (9½).

5. I think Abraham thought God told him to kill his son. I think Jesus would not have asked Abraham to kill his son. (9½).

" What do you think Lot ought to have done when Abraham gave him the first choice of pasture? " The following answers were given:—

1. I think Lot should have given Abraham the best part. (9).

2. I think Lot ought to have shared the best pasture with Abram (8½).

3. I think Lot ought to have given his uncle the nicest land. (9).

4. I think Lot ought to have said, " Let us share this part." (8½).

5. When Abram gave Lot the choice of land he ought to have chosen the worst. (9½).

Here are a few answers to the subsequent question:—

What would you have written on the wall of the Cave of Machpehah?

1. Here lies Abraham, who was a very good man. (9½ years).

2. Here lies Abraham, who came all the way from Ur. (9 years).

3. Here lies Abraham, who came from Chaldea. (8½ years).

4. If I had had anything to do with what was written on Abraham's tombstone I should have put—Abraham lies here, he was a pois (!) man, and had a huge family who he tried to make good. (9 years).

5. Here lies Abraham, the father of many children. (9 years).

Such really spontaneous and honest answers were certainly valuable material, on which the teacher could base any intervention thought helpful at this point, and which would prepare very adequately for her dealing constructively and inspiring with the question problem, whether with individuals, or with the class as a whole.

As regards the method generally, the Teacher (who was particularly gifted and stimulating, we may say, in mass teaching, and handling the class as a whole), said, at the close of term: "At the beginning the children's questions were overwhelming—now they settle into work as a matter of course. The other day I was late for some reason in entering the class room; I found the children when I entered *already busily at work*." Speaking of the children's books, and of one slow boy in particular, she said: "I never realized before how much I did for the children, and how very little they really did for themselves. As for J.'s book, it will have very little in it at the end of the term, but that little will be *his very own*."

But we have digressed far enough, maybe, upon minutiae of apparatus before introducing our readers to other practical applications of the Self-Teaching Method, which have come under our notice, more especially with regard to older scholars.

From its nature, the Self-Teaching Method can be used individually by any Teacher in any department without compulsion upon the rest or modification of the school's organization or syllabus.

A CLASS OF 11 OR 12-YEAR-OLDS.

A large and rather noisy main department comes to the writer's mind, where all classes were occupied with the usual class teaching and expression work, with the exception of one class of 11 and 12-year-olds, which was working on Self-Teaching lines under the guidance of a Teacher keen enough to experiment while no one else would follow her example. Her keenness merited success, and indeed was securing it, as was evident from the eager faces and absorbed work of her scholars, contrasting as they did with the classes around her.

SELF-TEACHING IN THE
INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT.

A flourishing northern Sunday School next comes to mind, where Self-Teaching methods were in use with four of the upper classes.

Two of these classes, boys and girls of 12 to 14 years, were at work sitting at two long tables, their Teachers (a man and a woman respectively) sitting at the ends, acting as "*referee*," but when not needed, working as hard as their own scholars, and entering their results in their own Study notebooks.

The keenness and quietness of these two groups were very marked, as also was the excellence of the work to be seen in the scholars' notebooks.

Passing into a large adjoining classroom, fitted with day school desks, we found two Senior Classes, boys and girls of 14 to 16 years of age, also busy over Self-Teaching work. It was interesting to notice how attentive and unself-conscious were those elder boys, some in appearance long-legged young men. "I found no difficulty with them over it," said the Teacher in charge of the group. "They took to it like ducks to water. Many of them are Grammar School boys, and

accustomed to study-methods. They feel they are really learning something," he added.

A LADS' BIBLE CLASS.

Another lads' class of rather older youths (16 to 18 years) in a northern school, came under our notice. They had been "difficult" for some time, and the Teacher decided to try new methods. She talked over the Self-Teaching plan with them, and secured their co-operation. Then she decided on a Self-Teaching course rather *below* than above their abilities, "to give them courage," as she said; it was, in fact, a general rapid course on the "Library of the Bible." The Teacher suggested that, as they went quickly through the whole Bible, they should be deciding which book they would particularly like to study in detail. The boys worked with zest, two forging right ahead of the rest and completing the course. One of these decided to study the book of Amos, and another the Epistles. There was no doubt that the Self-Teaching method was here responsible for an unexpected and quite new interest in the Bible.

Another lively class of girls (reputed to be "difficult,") completing such a Self-Teaching general course as above, was asked by their teacher to vote in order to decide upon which book of the Bible they would like to have a course of lessons. In this case the Teacher retired to a distance, so as to leave the class free for discussion. She watched this in progress, earnest and prolonged. "Miss, we want Revelations," was their final decision! She gladly complied with their request.

One Senior Department comes to our mind where we found a Self-Teaching class of Senior boys working under a male Teacher in a class room by themselves. The absorption of the boys, the excellence of their notebook work were obvious; we endeavoured to extract the Teacher's views.

"I always give a five minutes Class Lesson first," he said. "Then they go ahead, but all the time there is one of them up at my desk, and I am giving him a lesson. One thing I have found out about the method," he went on, "I never could get these fellows to *ask questions*. They wouldn't give themselves away, or were too shy, I suppose. I said, 'Ask me questions,' but they didn't. Now they do, quite naturally and automatically. It has broken down the barrier somehow."

A YOUNG WOMEN'S BIBLE CLASS.

A Bible class of young women, whose Self-Teaching work we have followed with interest for some years, began with a general course on the Bible, and then by vote of the class proceeded to a special study of the "Story of Creation." They became most interested in their work, making careful copies from the *picture-portfolio* which contained a set of interesting photographs of fossil trees and animals, stellar worlds, and other pages from God's Book of Nature, as revealed by modern science in the world of to-day.

"OPTIONS" IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

In connection with Self-Teaching Methods, a plan used in a Senior Department formerly known to the writer may be of interest. There were four classes in this Department, and each class was led by a Teacher who specialized on one particular subject at any rate, for a certain time. At the beginning of the year, the four subjects were put before the Department as a whole by the Superintendent, a short talk on them was given, and the syllabus of each course pinned up on the wall. Then the scholars were asked to select which group they wished to attach themselves to. This gave satis-

faction to that desire for independence and free choice which is so marked a characteristic of the adolescent; it enabled a scholar to continue in a group or to pass on as he wished; to take a particular subject a second time; to attend a Self-Teaching Class *or* a lecture class—in short, to make use of the classes in the Sunday School in somewhat the way in which he is accustomed to use the classes in his own Night School or Technical Institute.

In the particular case we have spoken of the options were as follows, for the first quarter:—

CLASS A. Prophets. (Lecture Course).

CLASS B. Gospels. (Self-Teaching Course).

CLASS C. The Old Testament. (Lecture Course).

CLASS D. *Liturgy*. (Self-Teaching Course).

A SELF-TEACHING CLASS ON "SCOUT" LINES.

But it is not only on Sunday or in Day School that the writer has watched Self-Teaching classes at work. We recollect a crowded class-room one Friday evening in an industrial town; some forty or fifty Scouts and Guides were working happily and busily at different Self-Teaching courses (one upon the League of Nations), under the leadership of one responsible Teacher, the team leaders sitting at the ends of the rows, each in charge of the picture portfolio and a set of Bibles. (A Self-Teaching Guide completed and initialled and inserted into the scholar's guide case, provides a pleasure similar to that obtained by working for and obtaining a badge. There is room for much development in this direction. The writer recollects a main Sunday School awakened into new life by being reorganized into teams and working it on the lines of the Scout and Guide movement.)

MISSIONARY SELF-TEACHING CLASSES.

Week-night Teachers' Training Classes on Self-Teaching lines will be described more fully in Chapter IV. We will only pause now to speak of Self-Teaching Missionary Classes, both here and abroad. It is obvious how applicable are self-teaching methods to Junior and Senior missionary work at home. Any averagely intelligent Teacher can make up for herself a self-teaching guide on a set of missionary picture postcards which she may collect, and a profitable study hour may be spent on them, *e.g.* :—

- (1) Study these pictures of native people in.....
 - (2) Write down all you can find out about their daily life.
 - (3) How are they like ourselves and how are they different?
 - (4) What can you find out about their religion?
 - (5) How would you begin to teach them about the Christian religion?
-

(6) Study these pictures of missionaries and their work. Write down all you can find about their daily life.

(7) What do you think are (a) the hardest, (b) the happiest things in their life?

(8) How may they be helped by people at home?

(9) Draw a map of the country in which the natives and missionaries live, marking the route from England, the mission stations, etc.

But not only in missionary circles at home do we find the Self-Teaching Method of use. Classes on these lines are at work in Canada, the United States, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, India, and even in the wilds of South America and the distant missionary settlements of China. The writer recalls a conversation with a missionary who had worked for many years in China. "We must use the Self-Teaching Method," he said, "simply because the country is so vast. *We have* to teach individually, and trust to individuals to teach others."

A missionary in a vast, sparsely populated district known to us, keeps in touch with his scattered and distant stations, and groups of children and adults entirely by Self-Teaching methods.

MARKING TIME.

The general principle of the Self-Teaching Method will be that each course will begin with an *introductory collective lesson* by the teacher, and the scholars will then work through and initial the individual assignments until a time suitable for the next collective lesson. But some scholars will work faster than others, and therefore have some time to spare before the others reach the same stage and can join with them for the collective work. This "Marking Time" for the quicker scholars must be made profitable and enjoyable, and it can be utilised in different ways.

(1) A small *library* (composed of single copies of different books) can easily be put together, comprising stories from the Foreign Mission field, stories of the Saints, etc. A scholar can be in charge of this library, and when anyone has finished all the work required before the next collective lesson, he can hand in his "guide" to the teacher, and join the library section of the class, filling up his time by private reading, and noting in his note book each day the pages read.

(2) The "marking time" period can alternatively be used for *learning by heart* passages from Bible or Hymn Book.

(3) Some additional assignment can be set—*e.g.*, the copying of some picture that has been made use of, the correction or completion of any past work done; the illumination of a Prayer-Card for home use; the sketching of a map, or printing of some memory passage upon the class black-board, or the answering of some special "problem

question " which will occupy some time. In some cases advanced scholars may be promoted to be Class Helpers, set to assist those slower than themselves, to help absentees, etc. All these plans have been tried with success.

But even so it will be objected that some scholars, especially slow workers or new scholars, or frequent absentees, cannot have finished all the work by the time that most of the class are ready for the next collective lesson. This cannot be avoided (nor, indeed, can it by any method of *Class-Teaching*), and in any " guide " the assignments should be arranged to minimize this difficulty. The more essential assignments should follow immediately upon the collective lesson, and constitute a minimum syllabus (the minimum must, of course, always include the reading of the Bible passage on which the immediate subsequent work depends); but it is not necessary that every scholar should each time undertake all the suggestions for work that are given. (Of course, he may, if he will, go back and fill up any gaps at any late stage. The scholars have generally liked to do this.) Moreover, where the work is entirely individualized, and the class lessons are studied by the scholars themselves from the text books provided, the difficulty we are discussing does not occur. Moreover, there can be arranged Self-Teaching courses where *no* group lessons are obligatory (though some can always be given, if desired), and in this case the scholars work straight on.

An example of a good " Marking Time " problem question for a Senior Class, ages 14 to 16 years, is given below. The scholars were asked, after some study and class lessons on St. Paul's general missionary work, and his visit to Philippi, to write *an imaginary answer to that Epistle, such as might have been sent at the time of its recep-*

tion. They set to work (it was a class of 23) with a will, turning over the pages eagerly, and reading over the epistle with evident new interest, because of the new view point suggested.

We print below a few of the answers written as showing the scholars' *entirely unaided work*, the teacher being busied with other matters all the time.

BERYL S.

The saints that are at Philippi and the bishops and the deacons and all servants of the Lord Jesus Christ saluteth thee, Paul and Timothy.

Your letter brought much gladness to the hearts of all the saints to Jesus Christ at Philippi.

We realise all that you have suffered so that the gospel may progress and gladden yet more men. We shall indeed strive to fulfil your mission to preach the gospel afar, fearing not the persecution and envy of those that believe not. All that we do shall be in love of Our Lord, so that we may at last seek eternal life. To consider ourselves above others would mean destruction and we should not profit by it, for did not our Lord come to earth, humble and loving that all the world might be saved? The Lord Jesus, so high, so beautiful! did he not suffer that *we* might be saved? Then why should we be afraid to suffer so that more men might receive the good news and glorify God?

Dear Paul, we will endeavour to do all things as thou commandst unto us, and preach the gospel widely, glorifying God as the light in this dark and sinful world.

We thank you, Paul and Timothy, for your goodness and thoughtfulness in sending so beautiful a letter instructing us in the ways of God, that we may be harmless and preach the gospel without a blemish, without fear and free from grumbling.

We have made several converts in Philippi and the surrounding villages. The Jailer has left the prison and we are all together following in your footsteps.

We sincerely hope you will soon be free to continue in your work to fight against those who strive to pervert the right ways of the Lord.

The brethren at Philippi rejoice with thee, Paul and Timothy, and to the glory of God and the Father for ever and ever. Amen.

KITTY B.

The brethren, at Philippi, servants of the most High God, to Paul and Timothy our deliverers.

We thank you for your kind remembrance of us, and for your cheerful greetings. Your letter was received with joy, and we thanked the Lord that the brave messenger arrived

safe. We praise the Lord for sending others into our midst, the fruit of your teaching. We rejoice that Epaphroditus has recovered from his sickness, and we hope that we may see you shortly, Timothy also. We, as you, wish to become as the Lord Jesus. Lydia becomes more zealous day by day, and we rejoice because the girl with the spirit of divination has broken away from her masters and come unto us. We rejoice in the Lord always, and make our forbearance known to all men. In our prayers we give all thanks and make our requests to God. We think of your imprisonment and sickness, and pray earnestly to the Lord to relieve you. We bear all persecutions and mockeries knowing that the Lord Jesus watches over us.

We and they of Cæsar's household salute you and the brethren.

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you now and ever more.

GERTRUDE C.

We, the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, send you greetings from Philippi. We received your epistle with great joy, and rejoiced in the words of the Lord's servant Paul. To Timothy, greetings also and to the saints of Cæsar's household.

We will carefully observe all things set down to us by you, and will glory in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us. We hold our meetings as often as possible and gather together as brothers in the cause of the Saviour. We will take all precautions to live good lives so that nothing evil shall taint the name of Jesus our Saviour. The Christ is our very being, we cannot live without his presence. We are like sheep without a shepherd, without the influence of our Gracious Saviour. Your epistle came as a guide to us on the difficult road of life. We have had a peaceful time lately and we were holding our usual gathering when the word of Jesus came to us through His faithful servant Paul. We will receive Timothy into our fold joyfully and praise the Lord who has delivered him into our hands. And our brother Epaphroditus; we are pleased indeed that he is well, and we are pleased to count him as one of us again. He has been away from his native town a great time and will be able to acquaint us with the preaching of our saint and brother Paul during his journeying. He will have much to recount, as brother Paul is persecuted as well as received for his gospel. Things have taken a great turn for the good of Christ since the memorable day of the earthquake, when we, with our hearts closed, cast Paul and Silas into the dungeons of the Romans. You were scourged in the market-place by our instigation for the word of Jesus, which we now rejoice in. Fare thee well, Paul, and God be with you always.

Greetings from the Christian Philippines, in hopes of more converts to our faith. Christ be with you always.

IV.—SELF-TEACHING IN THE TRAINING CLASS.

LET us now discuss the place of the Self-Teaching Method in the Teachers' Training Class

We shall take it for granted that readers of this book will have already become convinced of the *necessity for a weekly Teachers' Training Class*, and will have realized from their own practical experience and their knowledge of children, that the grading of the Training Class is as important as the grading of the school, and that *Departmental Training Classes* are essential.

Let us, therefore, deal with the question we are discussing, Department by Department.

I. BEGINNERS AND PRIMARY DEPARTMENT TRAINING CLASS.

Here our "Young Helpers" are being trained to teach, and much has already been written on the work of such training. It is generally recognized that such training class work must include four essential elements:—

- (a) Bible Study.
- (b) Child Study.
- (c) Lesson Study.
- (d) The Study of Sunday School organization.

First of all as regards (a) Bible Study.

Some Trainers and Leaders find it very profitable to take some of their study of the Bible Narra-

tive upon which the lesson is based upon Self-Teaching lines. One Self-Teaching Guide (see page 84), (in which the work includes one very elementary question upon every book of the Bible), has been found useful with somewhat young teachers (as well as with some Bible Classes). The quicker members of the class rapidly run through the guide, and all gain an increased sense of the Bible, as a varied Library of Literature.

Other Trainers have found it useful to let their young Teachers work through some Self-Teaching Course on the Gospel, *e.g.*, C1, National Society's Self-Teaching Guides, many of the questions in which are based upon the useful material as to our Lord's boyhood at Nazareth, which is gathered together in T. R. Glover's memorable book, "The Jesus of History." It is quite a new experience for many young teachers to *discover for themselves* that much knowledge as to our Lord's early life can be gained from a study of His recorded utterances as a man, and far more impression is made upon them by Self-Teaching Methods plus Class Lessons than by Class Lessons alone.

The following guide (from the National Society's Self-Teaching Series) is used in some Teachers' Training Classes. The questions are printed on perforated slips so that they can be torn off and given to a single Teacher or to a couple of friends to work out.

Q. 1.

SELF-TEACHING.

LESSON SOURCES.

1. Ask your Trainer any question you wish; also for pictures, maps, books, etc.

2. Put your initials in left-hand margin as you finish each piece of work. Show each piece of work, when you have done it, to your Trainer, who will then initial in right-hand margin.

<i>Student's Initials.</i>		<i>Trainer's Initials.</i>
	1. Read; from what persons did the writer most probably obtain his knowledge?	
	2. Draw a map to show all places mentioned in the passage.	
	3. Study and (if you wish) copy any pictures illustrating the same.	
	4. What does mean?	
	5. What is the most difficult sentence in the passage? Copy it out, stating or explaining the difficulty.	
	6. What words in this passage do you consider most memorable or inspiring?	

(b) CHILD STUDY.

The essential basis of all Training Class work must be the development in "the Young Helpers," of an attitude of observant interest in *individual* children; hence real Child Study must begin individually, as regards the Teachers, and be directed towards individual children.

But Leaders often experience the practical difficulty in the Training Class Hour, of discussing with their entire staff of Young Helpers the characteristics of individual children, who are possibly known, or, at any rate well-known only by the Helper who teaches them on the Sunday. It may be that "Jimmy Smith" is the "Subject" for Child Study on some particular Training Class night. Elsie Stevens (one of the Young Helpers)

is deeply interested in Jimmy, and earnestly needs help as to dealing with him (she had a very disheartening experience with him the previous Sunday), but the rest of the class are somewhat bored with her teaching problem, and wishful to discuss their own.

Hence the most valuable Child Study is usually done *individually*.

Maybe the Trainer walks home with a Teacher after School or Training Class, and hears the trouble and gives advice suited to the case. A useful practice adopted for some time by a Primary Leader, has been to arrange to meet each one of her staff of teachers (in rotation) on the usual Training Class night (about a quarter of an hour earlier than the arranged time), with the idea of going through with her (or him) the expression work of her (or his) class. The Young Teacher, over a batch of his own expression work, will easily pass to discussion of the individual children, and the Trainer can thus discover individual difficulties, and give useful individual advice.

Some Trainers again find it useful (regularly and occasionally) to devote ten minutes or a quarter of an hour of the Training Class to Self-Teaching Work on Child Study or Mind Study.

The following Self-Teaching Guide has proved useful, the Young Teachers working singly or in pairs, and coming up to the Trainer with each completed bit of work. Sometimes the work can be done at home and brought to class.

S. 1.

SELF-TEACHING

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

It is intended that those using the Guide should *read ahead* two or three questions each week in class, so that they may have an opportunity on the following Sunday of getting together material for the answers, which they will write the following week.

Date began *Date ended*

Subject: CHILD STUDY.—I.*Textbook:* TALKS TO THE TRAINING CLASS.*Scholar's Name*

1. Ask your Trainer any question you wish; also for pictures, maps, books, etc.
2. Put your initials in left-hand margin as you finish each piece of work. Show each piece of work, when you have done it, to your Trainer, who will then initial in right-hand margin.

*Student's
Initials.**Trainer's
Initials.*

1. Write down on separate lines the names of the children in your class. Which of them are *quiet or shy*, or restless and active? Which are strong-willed or weak-willed? Which are "sharp"; which are imaginative? Write down something about the character of each child.
2. How do the children in your class show their individuality (a) before school, (b) during the opening or closing of school, or during school celebrations, (c) after school, (d) during your lesson, (e) during "expression work"?
3. Write down any remarks you can remember which were made to you last Sunday by any children in your class; what did each of these remarks show as to the character of the child who made it?
4. Read *Textbook, Section I.*, pp. 34-36, and compare with the answers you have written to question (2).
5. Why are children different to each other? Give as many reasons as you can.
6. Write down six things which (a) a town child, (b) a country child would be sure to have seen before he was six years old.

Student's
Initials.

Trainer's
Initials.

7. Write down on separate lines the names of the children in your class, and write down against as many names as you can anything that you know about the child's home and family. Put an x against any child whose parents you know by sight; put xx to any child whose parents you have spoken to.
8. Read *Textbook, Section II.*, pp. 36-38, and compare with the answer you have written to question (5).
9. Write down six things which the children in your class *see* in Sunday School every Sunday; which of these things may help them to feel the presence of the God of Peace and Joy and Love, and which of them may hinder this?
10. Every Sunday School opens and closes with a Hymn and a Prayer. (a) What is the reason for this? (b) Of what may a child be thinking when his thoughts wander in prayer? (c) What is he likely to see if his eyes are open during prayer? (d) How may he be helped by the sight of his Teacher praying?
11. Children are different not only because they are brought up differently but because they are *born different in body and temperament*. Which of your children are (a) strong, (b) delicate, (c) slow-moving, (d) quick and nervous?
12. Which of your children seem to you (a) ill-fed, (b) scantily-clothed, (c) deaf, (d) short-sighted, (e) often tired? Can you think of any way to help these children?
13. "To know all of a child's physical drawbacks is often to pardon all." What do you think this means?

*Student's
Initials.*

*Trainer's
Initials.*

14. Children are born different in temperament. Which of your children seem to have a temperament which is generally (a) happy, (b) sad, (c) sometimes happy and sometimes sad, (d) hasty and impatient, (e) slow and cautious, (f) difficult to teach?
15. How would you try to help a child who is "difficult" because of (a) fits of temper, (b) untruthfulness, (c) mischief, (d) obstinacy?
16. Read *Textbook*, pp. 39 and 40, and copy out the last sentence of *Chapter III*.
17. Make a design for a Baptism or Cradle Roll to be used in Sunday School, or else write out a letter which might be sent to any parents asking them to allow their baby's name to be placed on the Baptism or Cradle Roll of the Church.
18. Write down the names of all children in your class who have babies at home. Then copy out the prayer for them which is used in your Sunday School.
19. How long do you think a child likes to be called a "baby"? Give your reasons.
20. How is a baby of one or two years of age different from a grown-up person (a) in his body, (b) in his mind?
21. Write down all the things you can think of that a baby likes to do.
22. Write down six reasons for which a baby may begin to cry; what is he trying to say in each of these cases?
23. What is the best way to stop a baby's crying?
24. Have you ever got a crying child to "turn his attention" and think of something else? Tell what you did.

<i>Student's Initials.</i>		<i>Trainer's Initials.</i>
	25. Read <i>Textbook IV.</i> , pp. 40-43.	
	26. How do we know an orange when we see one? How did we know an "orange" when we saw it for the first time? Which of our five senses did we use in gaining this knowledge?	
	27. What does a baby like (a) to taste, (b) to touch, (c) hear, (d) smell, (e) see?	
	28. Through a baby's five senses he discovers the world. How does a baby get to know (a) his own mother, (b) his father, (c) his brother or sister?	
	29. How does a baby first learn about prayer? How can we help a little child to learn?	
	30. Read <i>Textbook V.</i> , pp. 44-46. Copy the last sentence.	

A leader sends us the following comments on a first use of this Guide:—

My Kindergarten Training Class consists of six girls, four of whom have left school for one or two years, two of whom are in the top standards of an elementary school, one girl of about nineteen or twenty, who is in business, and one married woman.

There has not been sufficient time to go into the Child Study paper at all fully, but it was discussed in class, and I noted the following facts about it:—

1. It certainly aroused interest. The girls were very conversational and evidently thought about it, at any rate in some cases.

2. Most of the girls, having had baby brothers and sisters, etc., were interested in questions 21, 22, 23, and 24. Most were able to have a "shot" at question 1.

3. Question 26 aroused their curiosity, but they were not able to answer it satisfactorily. I pointed out the use of all their five senses, and it struck them as a new thought.

4. They were interested in Question 6, and discussed at length whether the child under six *could* have seen, under all circumstances, this or that suggested thing.

5. Question 12 aroused discussion but not any very clear conclusions.

6. For Question 3 one girl said that in giving the lesson about the Impotent Man she had said that the man had no friends to help him to the well. Some time after the lesson one child of six said, "He did have one friend—Jesus."

7. Most of the other questions were not touched. I think it would be an excellent plan to work them out one at a time at the classes; but I think the leader should be *well* trained in them herself, so that the girls should not go away with indefinite ideas, or this might lead to merely idle gossip perhaps.

8. Question 5 was attempted and discussed, but its roots, which are truly rather deep, were not reached. Some of the girls thought that children were different from each other because they went with different companions, who had good or bad influences upon them. I asked why they went with different companions, and whether the difference did not lie as much in the child as in the companions; but this they were unable to answer.

It should be noted, in using such a guide as the above, that an introductory class lesson on "Child Study" should be given to the Teachers first, and it will be found useful to give a class lesson (after the Teachers have made some attempt to answer the problems), on such topics as are suggested by question 9 (Our Schoolroom, and what it means); question 10 (Prayers in School); question 15 (Difficult Children). In these the Trainer can draw together the individual contributions of the class, add to them from her own experience and knowledge, and suggest further observations or action.

Such a question as No. 17 needs to be followed next week by a Training Class symposium, in which the different individual results are compared and collected together.

"OCCUPATIONS" IN THE TRAINING CLASS.

But it may be asked, if the Teachers are for some weeks individually working through a Child Study or Bible Study Self-Teaching Guide, and coming to the Leader to show and discuss the work from time to time, how can opportunities for this individual discussion be made?

We would suggest that every now and then some *occupation* should be devised for the Training Class, at which *all* the Teachers can be working, while *individually* they can come out and show their Self-Teaching Work to the Trainer, and discuss it with her; such occupations may be:—

(i.) Mounting pictures for class use and making portfolios to hold them.

(ii.) Making brown paper albums to hold scholar's expression work.

(iii.) Printing "absentee" cards (a card drawing the attention of parents to the absence of their children from Study School).

(iv.) Writing invitations to parents; or

(v.) Printing cards sending the parents on some special Sunday a greeting and message from the Department.

(c) LESSON STUDY.

An example will perhaps show best how individual methods may be employed in the preparation of the lesson during the Training Class Hour. The writer recollects visiting on one occasion a Training Class where the young boy and girl helpers were accustomed to sit somewhat passively during the greater part of the class listening to their capable and experienced Leader.

"I can't get them to talk and discuss," she confessed, "or if any talk, it is just the same two every week." On the occasion recalled a new plan was adopted. For the first five minutes after the opening, the Leader herself talked continuously, mainly upon the deeper and spiritual aspects of the lesson chosen. "I want the Helpers to have something for themselves each week," was her idea. Then, after reading together the Bible passage on which the lesson was based, the class split up into pairs for individual work

It was a heterogenous group presenting a familiar difficulty. Some of the Helpers had been in the Primary Department for some years, and "knew all about it." One was training to be a Day School Teacher; two were raw, shy lads just leaving school; one was a keen young High School girl who had just joined the staff; one was a woman of marked musical ability. The Leader gave to each pair of teachers different numbered slips of paper on each of which a work assignment was printed.

The assignments were as follows:—

1. What words in this story would you most like a child to remember?
.....

2. How do you want your children to feel during the telling of this story?
.....

3. By what talk with the children would you introduce this story?
.....

4. Write five or six chapter-headings for the story.
.....

5. What children's expression work will be suitable to follow this story?
.....

6. Choose a hymn suggesting some thought in this story.
.....

7. What pictures might illustrate this story? Write the name of the painter and the title of the picture. What would you lead the children to notice in each case?
.....

8. What children's Prayer might follow this story?

The strips were not given out at random. It was noticeable that No. 6 fell to the musician, and

a girl who acted sometimes as deputy pianist; No. 8 to a pair of rather older and more experienced Helpers; No. 7 to the couple of active boys; No. 4 fell to the lot of the new young Helper from the High School, and also to one of the Teachers who had been longest in the school.

Then all settled to work, and the writer watched them at it. The two boys were busy with the Picture Roll in the cupboard, and afterwards with the portfolio of small pictures for class use; the musician and another teacher were occupied with the various hymn books in use in the Department; the rest were consulting their Bibles or each other and writing busily. After ten minutes the Leader called them together and asked for results, dealing with each question in turn, asking for the answers of each pair of Teachers who had attempted it, making helpful comments on these, and adding any thought that seemed necessary. While doing this, she jotted down notes on the blackboard, and at the close of the class it was possible to see that a systematic study of the lesson had been made.

Nos. 1 and 2 gave the *Teacher's Thought* or *Lesson Aim*; No. 3 the *Introduction* or *Point of Contact*; No. 4 the *outline* of the Lesson Story; No. 5 the *Expression Work*; Nos. 6, 7, 8, gave material for next Sunday's *Programme*, which the Helpers thus assisted to compose. It was interesting to notice how the *differences* between the Teachers were helpful to all. The young High School scholar gave a very scanty and booky answer to No. 4; you could see from her face how impressed she was with the answer given by one of the older Helpers, whose "Chapter Headings" were so much simpler and more in touch with the child's mind than her own. No. 3 brought very varied answers and provoked much discussion.

But the important point was that every single Teacher in the class, the shy, the forward, the experienced, the inexperienced, were occupied all the time and took part in the discussion. "I have never known them *all* to come out so much," said the Leader, and subsequent experience from other Leaders corroborate her view.

We may note, in passing, that some Leaders may prefer *the previous week* to give out the assignments as above (varying, of course, the slips given from week to week, so that every Teacher in time deals with each question); others may prefer to give out the whole set of questions, Nos. 1 to 8, to each Teacher at one weekly Training Class, or on the Sunday asking each to prepare beforehand as many questions as possible, and bring the answers to class.

(d) SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDY AND ORGANIZATION.

The best way of employing the Self-Teaching Method in this section of the Training Class Work is for the Leader to divide up the duties and responsibilities of the School, among the Young Helpers, and rigorously avoid doing anything she can get them to do for themselves or the School. The energetic, capable Leader, who does everything has often (on her temporary absence or illness) brought a Department to collapse.

Further, many Leaders of late years have found the benefit of encouraging their Young Helpers to take part, not only in the preparation of the room for the Sunday (seeing to apparatus, putting out chairs, pictures, etc.), but also to *share in leading the devotional exercises themselves*.

This can be done by using a sheet of perforated slips, as shown below; giving one slip to each Teacher either on Sunday or at Training Class.

TEACHER'S DUTIES.

(1) PICTURE HELPER.

Make ready table. Get and put up picture, asking a child to help.

Tell subject to children.

Ask one child to point out the Lord Jesus. Let any others point to anything they like, and do the same yourself.

.....

(2) CRADLE ROLL HELPER.

Put up Cradle Roll.

Write on board or roll names of any babies the children have at home, asking them to tell the names.

Give out certificates. Receive letters.

Give out hymn.

Say prayer:

"O Lord Jesus Christ, Who didst say, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me,' we thank Thee for our babies at home, and we ask Thee to keep them always in Thy love."

.....

(3) BIRTHDAY HELPER.

Come to front. Ask who has had a birthday in past week or month. Fetch child from seat. Tell his age and name to the other children. Let children repeat birthday greeting; help to light candles and celebrate birthday.

Give out birthday hymn.

Say *birthday prayer* for children:

"Dear Father in Heaven, we thank Thee for the . . . bright years which Thou hast given to We ask Thee to keep him in the years that are coming, through Jesus Christ Our Lord."

.....

(4) HYMN HELPER.

Sing hymn so that every child can hear every word.

.....

(5) COLLECTION HELPER.

Hold up box or jar. Say where money is to go.

Ask a child to hold box.

Stand by him or her, and, when march is finished, say prayer:

"O Lord we ask Thee to take these gifts of love and use them to Thy service. For Jesu's sake. Amen."

.....

(6) MARCH HELPER.

Lead children in at beginning. Show children how to march at the proper time by choosing a child as leader from each line and marching with him. Lead children out at end.

.....

Finally, it may be that some of the Helpers who teach the older classes in the Department on Sunday, may be experimenting on Self-Teaching lines with Bible Study Cards in their classes. A short talk with these on the lines of chapters I. to III. in this book will prove useful.

II.—JUNIOR AND INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENTS.

Here some of the Teachers may be working on Self-Teaching lines with their classes, making use of Study Cards or Self-Teaching Guides dealing with the general lesson topic selected for the Department. What place, if any, can be found for Self-Teaching Methods in the work of the Teacher's Class under such conditions; and can the Self-Teaching Method be employed in the Training Class, even if the Sunday School itself uses no such methods?

BIBLE STUDY.

(1) Let us consider the last alternative first. Bible Study on Self-Teaching lines may form a part of any Teachers' Training Class, whether their scholars are working on Self-Teaching lines or not. A Department may, for instance, be taking lessons on St. Paul, and may devote a quarter of an hour of each Training Class to a Self-Teaching Guide on the Epistle to the Philippians (see page 90), or be teaching lessons on the Prophets, and study in class the book of Amos (see page 88).

(2) Let us now consider the case of a Teachers' class where Self-Teaching Guides are being taken

on the Sunday morning with the scholars themselves. How will the class alter its procedure?

A Teachers' Class, which aims to help its Teachers to teach on individual lines, must itself follow the same "individual" principle and practice, and this principle, when carried into practice involves, as we have seen, an alternation of *single class lessons with prolonged periods of Self-Teaching and private study*. Such, then, must be the procedure of the Teachers' Class. At the outset, a series of class lectures must be given for a few weeks upon the general topic of the Lesson Course, so that the Teachers may be prepared beforehand to answer any question their scholars may put to them. Then a Training Class must be devoted to a carefully going through the "Guides" with the Teachers, anticipating, if possible, the scholar's difficulties, filling in gaps in the Teacher's knowledge, etc. (Some Teachers always like to work through beforehand their scholars' Self-Teaching Guides, writing their answers for reference in a notebook, and getting their Trainer to "initial" the work as it proceeds.)

An evening spent with the Teachers over the Self-Teaching Guides (the Teachers acting the part of scholars, the Leader that of Teacher) will be found full of interest and profit. The Leader will be surprised at the gaps in the knowledge of his staff of Teachers, and at the variety in their attainments, and the Teachers will be surprised at how little they really know, and gain a real insight into the difficulties felt by their scholars.

The next Training Class may well take the form of a *Library Hour*. Some Teachers, owing to lack of privacy and quiet at home, value the Training Class hour as an opportunity (on occasions) for peaceful lesson study. The Leader should collect beforehand all the books, tracts, models, pictures,

etc., that he can find, which are illustrative of the work that is being done. He may introduce each book, etc., with a short verbal introduction, or insert into each a short slip noting useful pages, etc. Then for the hour, the Leader will act as a Librarian and Referee, and the Teachers will inspect and study in turn the various objects in the little "exhibition."

The Training Class following this may be given up to a review and comparison of the scholar's notebooks, showing the work done in Sunday School for the past few weeks. The Leader may go through the Self-Teaching Guide question by question, asking the Teachers, in the case of each question, for (1) any difficulties that have arisen; (2) any interesting answers given; (3) any questions asked; (4) any misunderstandings evident.

These "points of difficulty" will probably provide material for one or two more Training Classes, at the close of which the weekly class will become for a few weeks a *Teachers' Study Hour*. The Trainer will arrange, if need be, to be free in a certain place at a certain hour each week to give any Teachers who desire it, individual help—lend or show books, examine children's work, etc.

We believe it will be found that new interest in and zeal for the class will be aroused by this new method of conducting it. A continued fixed weekly engagement is a drag on the time and energies of both Trainer and trained, as all testify. In the Kindergarten or Primary Department such a weekly class is imperative. The Young Helpers need each week help for the coming Sunday, and much detailed Bible and Child Study as well; but in the Junior and Intermediate Department a keen attendance for a few weeks may well be followed by a break such as we have suggested, and this will, we prophesy, result in a renewed interest in

meeting again later on. We give below the syllabus of a Training Class for Junior or Intermediate Department, where Self-Teaching Guides on the Gospel (C1 and C2, National Society's Self-Teaching Series), were being taken by all classes except the two upper ones.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS.

A series of Six Lectures and Discussions on "Gospel Background," preparatory to C1 and concurrent with C2.

Week.

1. The land where our Lord lived. (See Guide questions 1-20 and 44-46.).
2. The Old Religion and the New Commandment. (See Guide questions 21-30).
3. The people Jesus met.
4. How the Gospels were written. (See Guide questions 37, 39, 49).
5. What the "Temptations" mean.
6. (a) Review of Children's Work and Guides. (b) Teachers each make a large map of Palestine in outline or relief to illustrate their lessons.
7. Exhibition of pictures and models and book illustrating the Gospel Story. (Each teacher brings some one picture or model or book).
8. Compare and discuss children's answers to Nos. 5, 19, 41.

Epiphany and Lent.

Weeks 9-20. Self-Teaching; Teachers study at home or in Training Class room; Trainer gives individual help.

21 to 26. A second course of Six Lectures and Discussions on the Gospel Teaching and Message followed by discussion of children's work.

At any point in the Training Class periods may be devoted to—(1) *map and model making* in connection with the lesson course; (2) a *Discussion Hour* on any "problem" question which has arisen; (3)

a *devotional hour* for the teachers' own benefit; or a short course of addresses on the subject matter of the lessons may be given.

Leaders must, of course, use their own discretion in adapting Self-Teaching Methods to the Training Class work, according to the circumstances in which they are placed. At any rate, the Trainer, during these Self-Teaching weeks, will be able to get into touch with the individual members of his Training Class, and this is vital to the success of the work.

V.—SELF-TEACHING AND THE PARENT.

WHAT connection, if any, has the method of Self-Teaching with the problem of our touch upon the parents of our scholars? It is obvious that anything we can do to increase our parents' interest in Sunday School work will react beneficially upon the attendance of our scholars.

THE PARENTS' EVENING.

One means for increasing the interest is, as we have for some time discovered, the Annual Parents' Sunday School Evening, and one of the most attractive items in its programme is to be found in an exhibition of the Self-Teaching work of their sons and daughters.

Such an evening comes vividly before the writer's mind—the parents crowding in, met by the Teachers, each Teacher on the look out to greet the parents of his particular scholars, each Cradle Roll Mother adorned on entering with a white ribbon rosette; then the cup of tea and talk, and a general move to inspect the "tables" placed round the room. The Primary and Beginners' Department table was gay with flowers, and the apparatus used on Sunday; the Birthday Candles, the Cradle Roll, the Collection Jar, the Scholars' Expression drawings. The next table showed the apparatus of the Junior Department, the hymn sheets, maps, pictures, calendar, monitors' badges, class bags, and

the scholars' notebooks; the next the Study notebooks of the "Intermediate" Department and Senior classes.

It was encouraging to see the interest taken by the parents in the notebooks of their children. "I must see my boy Tommy's book before I go home," explained a parent, "I'll never face him without."

Then followed a short address on the work of the Sunday School, and after a hymn and prayer the evening was over.

"I never understood, like, before," said a parent, as she passed out.

Thus the scholars' portfolios and Self-Teaching notebooks do indeed show the parents an important part of what we are doing with their children on the Sunday, and the annual exhibition of the scholars' Self-Teaching notebooks can be made a real teaching agent for the parents themselves, and increase their interest and knowledge.

THE HOME DEPARTMENT AND ITS WORK.

But some Sunday Schools may find it possible to go still further, and organize in some form or other, some kind of a *Home Department*. This may consist, in its simplest and humblest form, of a mere list of the names and addresses of parents (and that may be only two or three to start with), who would like to take some small, though real, trouble to share in their children's work. A simple invitation to do this may, for instance, accompany on an occasion the taking home of a Gospel Story Card by a child, with such a covering letter as is given below.

"DEAR MR. OR MRS.—

Would you like to share in the work of our Sunday School by either reading the Bible story with your child, or asking him to read it to you, or finding it for him in your own Bible? If

you would like to do this, please return this card next Sunday, and we will enrol your name as a member of our Home Department."

A similar suggestion may accompany the taking home of a study card and a blank sheet of paper.

"Will you share with us in the work of the Sunday School by helping your child to do the questions on this card before next Sunday? Kindly write your name on his work when he has finished it."

A further suggestion may go home with a Self-Teaching Guide, asking the parent to go through the questions with the scholar, and to initial his answers if they appear to be correct.

It may be possible even to bring together some of the parents for a Study Circle of their own, and a Self-Teaching Course will be most valuable as defining the lines on which they may work.

SELF-TEACHING AND THE MOTHERS' MEETING.

Finally, in the weekly Women's Meeting or Mothers' Meeting, a useful place can be found for Self-Teaching. Some of the younger women quite enjoy 15 minutes a week during the meeting, in which they sit round a table with pencils and notebooks, and teach themselves something of the Bible, or of simple child study, while the older mothers sit, as usual, listening to an address or watching the play of their grandchildren on the floor.

VI.—SELF-TEACHING AND THE COUNTRY SUNDAY SCHOOL.

THE problems of the country Sunday School are well-known. Numbers, as regards scholars, are small, and attendance depends very largely upon the weather. Teachers are difficult to obtain, and have few opportunities for improving their own scanty education. Books and apparatus are scarce.

At any rate, in a country Sunday School, we constantly find a number of scholars of widely differing ages and interests in charge of one or two individuals. To teach them merely collectively is a futile task; the result will be either increasing restlessness and inattention, or else the establishment of an outside attitude of apparent interest, which covers up the fact that the scholars have ceased to attend to the lesson at all. Here comes in the helpfulness of the Self-Teaching Method. A concrete example will best illustrate our meaning.

A SCHOOL IN A COACHHOUSE.

It was a small school of some twenty scholars in a remote country village, and the Sunday School was held in an old coach house, lit by one window and a door. There was no piano, and so the scholars, under the leadership of the one Teacher, sang all the more! The younger children sat on little chairs, and a "Young Helper" sat with them; she was trained for her work by a Training Class hour during the week. The rest of the children sat on big chairs; there was a row of boys

and girls, varying in age from 8 to 12, and a row of elder boys and girls at the back—in reality *three* departments of a Graded Sunday School and half-a-dozen scholars to each department! Truly a pedagogic problem of some stiffness, and all to be solved by one young energetic Teacher. How did she solve it? She arranged the room with care; table, flowers and branches (plenty of these and easy to get), sacred picture, Cradle Roll, Birthday Candles, etc., all was there, and the celebrations duly kept, the older scholars being as keenly interested as were the younger ones. Then came lesson time, and the grouping of the scholars. The front row moved their chairs round their young helper, who proceeded to take her story and expression work. The back row turned round to a trestle table standing against the wall, on which were ready Bibles, hymn books, pencils, portfolios, etc., and began their Self-Teaching work in pairs; three different courses were being studied, one on the Bible in general, one on the Gospels, and one on the Liturgy.

Meanwhile, the Leader had put herself in charge of the middle group, and was giving the class lesson. When this was over she left them to work alone on Study Cards and Expression of the lesson, while she took her seat at the end of the trestle table and proceeded to examine and initial Self-Teaching work, answer questions, and clear up difficulties generally with the Senior class.

Then, after a minute or two over the little children's expression work, she gave the signal for corporate worship, the scholars formed into rows again, and the school closed with hymn and prayer. "Some Sundays," she told us, "I give more time to the Senior Group and sometimes more to the middle row. If the children come early they start work by themselves."

“STARTING WORK BY THEMSELVES.”

This “starting work” by themselves was what brought conviction to an elderly Teacher known to us, who, for a long time had struggled with an obstreperous class of boys in a country school. Before and after Sunday morning school (distances were too great to allow of an afternoon service), the boys would “hang round” and “rag” in the lane, and this went on during the lesson itself. In despair rather than hope, he started Self-Teaching. “The boys are as keen as mustard—the thing is quite changed,” he said. and continued: “The other Sunday I had unavoidably to come five minutes late. I fully expected to see the boys outside in the lane ‘ragging,’ as in former days. There was no one in sight as I drew near, and no sound. I went as quietly as I could into the schoolroom, and there were the boys, all hard at it—started work by themselves! I could scarcely believe my eyes,” he concluded, with a laugh.

One more example from another country school.

A sullen looking boy was bending earnestly over his notebook and portfolio in a Self-Teaching class of scholars, 10 to 14 years. “That boy,” said the Teacher in charge of the group, “was a problem! A perfect nuisance he was a regular little devil for mischief—and idle to boot. In Self-Teaching—well, he’s found himself—clears ‘Guide’ after ‘Guide’ as quick as you can give them to him, and has long ago left all the others behind. Too busy now to give any trouble.”

Can we not multiply our country Self-Teaching classes during the long months of winter when occupation is so needed?

VII.—THE CLASS LESSON AND INDIVIDUAL WORK.

WE have before spoken of the necessity for the Class Lesson in the Self-Teaching Method, and will, in this chapter, proceed to give some examples of its use.

The work with younger children in this respect has already been sufficiently described in Chapter III., page 25 *et seq*; we will, therefore, confine our remarks to scholars old enough to work on Self-Teaching Guides and Work Assignments.

I. THE CLASS LESSON INTRODUCTORY TO A COURSE.

In facing a fresh class, in opening a new subject or a section of a subject, the teacher in charge of a self-teaching unit, will use, as a rule, the collective method—the Class Lesson.

THE INTRODUCTORY CLASS LESSON.
SOME EXAMPLES. (1) THE LIBRARY OF THE BIBLE.

(i.) For example, the Teacher may be introducing to his class of nine to ten-year-olds a Self-Teaching Guide on the Bible, such as the one given below, published in the National Society's Self-Teaching Series; he may well precede it by a class lesson on "The Library of the Bible," on somewhat the following lines:—

"How many books have you of your own? What are your favourite books? What kind of

books have you read? Poems? Plays? Stories? Histories? Geographies? Have you a bookcase at home? How is it arranged?" etc., proceeding to a description of a public Library, a rough classification of books there (different shelves for different subjects, each book separate in its own cover, etc.), then contrasting a library of printed books to-day with the hand-written rolls and scripts of ancient times, kept maybe in a stone chest and tied together with a leather thong.

Then explain that the book of the Bible is a very ancient book, but that indeed it is not one book, but a *Library of Books*, all bound in one cover. Tell of the kinds of books to be found in the Bible, show various pages in your own Bible giving examples of (a) piece of poetry (e.g. Psalms); (b) history books (e.g. Kings); (c) geography (e.g. Joshua); (d) story (e.g. Ruth); (e) wise sayings (Proverbs); (f) sermons (e.g. Amos), etc.

Suggest the interest of being able to find in the Bible Library just which book one wants to read. "What are the books of the Bible about? Which of you can find *every* book? How many books in the Bible are there? Shall we find out?" etc.

O. 1.

SELF-TEACHING

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Date began *Date ended*

Subject: BIBLE (Introductory).

Scholar's Name

1. Ask your Teacher any question you wish; also for pictures, maps, books, etc.
2. Put your initials in left-hand margin as you finish each piece of work. Show each piece of work, when you have done it, to your Teacher, who will then initial in right-hand margin.

Scholar's
Initials.

Teacher's
Initials.

1. Count the number of books in the *Old Testament* and the number in the *New Testament*; how many books are there altogether?
2. Print the names of the first five books in the *Old Testament*
3. Find the book of *Genesis*, which means the book of "Beginnings"; what beginning does the first chapter tell about? Copy the first verse
4. The Jewish nation, the "children of Israel," began with one man, a shepherd chief. Read *Genesis* xii. 1-5, and write down his name
5. *Exodus* means "going out." Write down any word you know which begins with "ex" and also means "going out"
6. Read *Exodus* xii. 40 and 41; find *who* went out and *from what land* they went. Write down your answers. Draw a map to show their "exodus"
7. *Leviticus* is a book of the laws of the Jewish people; look at the first verse of chapters i., iv., vi., viii., xi., xii., xiii., xiv., xv., xvi., xvii., etc., in this book until you can write down the name of their great Law-giver ...
8. *Numbers* and *Deuteronomy* tell more about the Israelites' journey to the land of Canaan; draw a map of Canaan, putting in the river Jordan and Mount Pisgah
9. Read the Story in *Deuteronomy* xxxiv.; copy some verse about Moses from this chapter
10. Find the book of *Joshua* and read the first six verses; write down who Joshua was and what work he was called to do

Scholar's
Initials.

Teacher's
Initials.

11. The book of *Judges* tells about the Israelite chiefs who led the people in war; find and read the story of Jephthah's daughter from *Judges* xi. 11-12 and 29-40; draw a picture to illustrate this story or write down what you think about the people in it ...
12. The book of *Ruth* is a story of a famine and a harvest. If you finish this *Self-Teaching Guide* in time, read the story for yourself and illustrate it
13. Find the next two books (which tell about a great prophet) and write down their names. Read the story of the prophet's call in *1. Samuel* iii.
14. Find a Hymn which tells the same story and begins "Hushed was the Evening Hymn;" copy out the first two verses
15. Copy the names of the four books which follow the second book of *Samuel*; these books tell about the Jewish *Kings* and "*Chronicle*" their deeds
16. Read the story of the famous *King* Solomon and the Queen of Sheba from *1. Kings* x. 1-13, and illustrate it
17. Find the story of the last *King* in Jerusalem and read what happened in his reign (see *II. Chronicles* xxxvi. 11-20). Write down (a) the *King's* name and (b) the name of the *city* to which the Jewish people were carried away captive. Draw a map to show their journey to the city
18. Find the books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* which tell how the Jewish people returned to Jerusalem and built up again their ruined temple. What King let them go? See *Ezra* i ...

Scholar's
Initials,Teacher's
Initials.

19. Study a picture of Jerusalem and find the Temple on Mount Sion ...
20. Draw a map of Jerusalem to show the walls, gates and Temple
21. Print the names of the two books following the book of *Nehemiah* ...
22. The book of *Job* contains poems about "the wondrous works of God;" read *Job* xxxvii. 14-23, and, if you like, part of the next chapter, copying down any verse you think beautiful
23. Find the Hymn book of the Jewish people which is called *The Book of Psalms*. How many *Psalms* are there?
24. Which is your favourite *Psalms*? Read it; then write it from memory ...
25. Find the book of *Proverbs* or wise sayings. Read in the fifteenth chapter, verses 1, 13, 17 and 18, and copy out from them the *proverb* you like best
26. Turn through the book of *Ecclesiastes* and print the title of the book that comes after it; copy the Spring song you will find in this book from chapter ii. 10-13
27. Next come books by the great Jewish prophets; find the book of *Isaiah* and read chapter xl. 9-11. Of whom do you think the prophet is speaking?
28. Find the book of *Daniel* and read the story in the sixth chapter. Draw or describe a picture to illustrate this
29. Turn to the *New Testament* and print the names of the first four books. "Gospel" = "good news;" of what "good news" do these books tell?
30. What book in the *New Testament* tells about the deeds of the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ? Find the last two verses of this book. Of what great disciple do they speak?

Scholar's
Initials.Teacher's
Initials.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 31. Next follows a collection of Letters or <i>Epistles</i> ; how many <i>Epistles</i> are there? | |
| 32. Read over the titles and the opening verses of all the <i>Epistles</i> and make a list of the names of (a) the writers of the letters, and (b) the people to whom they were written | |
| 33. Read <i>I. Corinthians</i> xiii. and print the verse in it which you like best... | |
| 34. Find the last book in the Bible; <i>who</i> wrote it and <i>where</i> did the writer see his vision—read <i>Rev.</i> i. 9 and 10 | |
| 35. Read the vision of the new Jerusalem in <i>Rev.</i> xxi.; copy the verse in it you like best | |
| 36. Make a sketch of a <i>chained Bible</i> , such as used to be kept in our churches when people had not Bibles of their own | |

With a senior class beginning to study the *Book of Amos* on Self-Teaching lines, a prefatory description of the personality and life of the prophet may arouse interest, *e.g.* :—

Amos the shepherd of Tekoa—lonely shepherd life—companionship with God—sense of His Presence in nature—journeys to sheep market at Jerusalem—to Kingdom of Israel—what Amos saw at Bethel, Gilgal, Samaria—what he thought of what he saw—his sense of coming doom—his “mind picture” of God—his preaching of the “doom”—his (traditional) martyrdom and death after the writing of his book.

Then proceed with the Self-Teaching Guide, as follows (printed by permission from the National Society's Series):—

SELF-TEACHING RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Date began *Date ended**Subject:* THE BOOK OF AMOS (Elementary).*Text Book for general reference*—"The Making of the Bible."*Scholar's Name*

1. Ask your Teacher any question you wish; also for pictures, maps, books, etc.
2. Put your initials in left-hand margin as you finish each piece of work. Show each piece of work, when you have done it, to your Teacher, who will then initial in right-hand margin.

*Scholar's
Initials.**Teacher's
Initials.*

1. Find the book of Amos; copy verse 1 and draw a map to show all places mentioned in it
2. What was the book of Amos like when it was first written? Study a picture of a Hebrew scroll and sketch it
3. What can you find out about the daily life of Amos? (See Amos i. 1 and vii. 14)
4. What memorable sights and sounds did Amos see and hear in his lonely life? Of what did these sights and sounds remind him? (See Amos iv. 13 and v. 8 and 24 before writing your answer)
5. Study pictures of the hills around Amos' birthplace and of Hebrew shepherds at their work; then describe an imaginary day in the life of Amos
6. Draw a map to show (i.) the village of Tekoa (ii.) the town of Jerusalem where Amos would go to sell his wool, (iii.) the high road from Judah into Israel on which he used to travel, (iv.) the Israelite towns of Samaria and Jezreel which he visited

*Scholar's
Initials.**Teacher's
Initials.*

7. Study a picture of the town of Samaria; here Amos saw poor people living in crowded streets and rich nobles in splendid palaces. (See Amos iii. 9)
8. What were these palaces like? (See Amos iii. 15; v. 11; and vi. 1, 4-6)
9. What evil deeds did Amos see the nobles doing? (See Amos iii. 9 and 10; v. 7, 10, 11 and 12)
10. Every year the nobles of Israel would meet for feasting and worship at Bethel or Gilgal. Put these places in your map
11. What did Amos see the nobles doing even while they were worshipping God at Bethel and Gilgal? (See Amos iv. 4 and 5)
12. The nobles of Israel thought all was well with them because they worshipped God, although they were cruel and unjust to men. What did Amos think was going to happen to them all? (See Amos v. 16, 17 and 27)
13. Tell in your own words the story of how Amos left his sheep and began to be a prophet and preacher. (See Amos vii. 14 and 15)
14. Amos journeyed through the kingdom of Israel preaching his message. What did he most often say? (See Amos v.)
15. At last Amos came to the great gathering of nobles at the town of Bethel. Draw a map to show his journey from Tekoa
16. What message did Amos give at Bethel? (See Amos vii. 11)
17. Who was priest at Bethel and what did he do? (See Amos vii. 10 and 11)

<i>Scholar's Initials.</i>		<i>Teacher's Initials.</i>
	18. Read what happened at Bethel from Amos vii. 12-17; write this as a scene in a play	
	19. It was thought that Amos was driven back by the nobles to his own village and there wrote his book before he died. Why do you think he wrote it?	
	20. Copy and learn by heart the verses you like best in the book of Amos...	
	21. If Amos came to our country to-day, what do you think he would say about our people and our towns? ...	

Or, with a Bible Class about to study the *Epistle to the Philippians*, an introductory lesson may be given on "Sunday morning in Philippi in early Christian times," picturing imaginatively the receiving and reading aloud by the little community of converts of the precious letter from St. Paul carried over land and sea, by some convert at the risk of his life, and still preserved in our Bible for us to read. Then proceed as follows (from the National Society's Self-Teaching Series):—

X.1.

SELF-TEACHING

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Date began Date ended

Subject: EPISTLE TO PHILIPPIANS.

Text Book for general reference—"The Foundation of the Church of Christ."

Scholar's Name

1. Ask your Teacher any question you wish; also for pictures, maps, books, etc.
2. Put your initials in left-hand margin as you finish each piece of work. Show each piece of work, when you have done it, to your Teacher, who will then initial in right-hand margin.

Scholar's
Initials.

Teacher's
Initials.

1. *By whom, to whom and where* was this letter written?
2. Who was its *bearer*? Draw a map to show his journey. Write down all you can discover about him from Phil. ii. 25-30 and iv. 18 ...
3. Read the first five verses of the letter; what "remembrances" would Paul have had of Philippi as regards (a) the town itself, (b) its people, (c) what happened there (see Acts xvi.)
4. Note Phil. i. 4; to what *persons* may the phrase "you all" have reference? Write a list
5. What happened to St. Paul between his first visit to Philippi and the writing of this letter? Give an outline of the chief events
6. Copy Paul's prayer for his Philippian friends, as given in chapter i.
7. What can you tell from the 1st Chapter as to Paul's condition of life when he wrote the letter and his views as to his future?
8. The following topics are dealt with in this letter. Note down shortly what is said about each:—
(a) a gift sent to Paul (see Phil. ii. 25 and iv. 10, 14, 15);
(b) a quarrel (see iv. 2, 3);
(c) Paul's friendship with Timothy.
9. Read through the Epistle, copying out any verses telling of the Philippians' affection for their great teacher Paul
10. See chap. iv. 16; where is Thessalonica? Draw a map and find out what happened there
11. What can you discover as to St. Paul's friends and occupations at the time when this letter was written? See Phil. i. 13; iv. 22

Scholar's
Initials.

Teacher's
Initials.

12. If this was the only letter of St. Paul's which you had ever read, what sort of a person would you take the writer to be? Note down the verses on which you base your view
13. *Where* and *when* do you think this letter was first heard by the Philippian Christians? What passages do you think they would most like to hear?
14. †What answer do you think was sent to this letter? Write an imaginary *reply* sent either by the Church in Philippi as a body or by an individual Christian
15. Copy out and learn the passage from this Epistle you consider most beautiful or helpful to remember ...
- 16.*Find the paradox given in Chap. ii. 12, 13, and explain what you think it means
- 17.*Find the phrase "unto the day of Jesus Christ" in chap. i. 6 and think out what it means in relation to Life after Death

* Optional and more advanced.

REVISION AND RECAPITULATION.

Once again, in revision and recapitulation, in drawing together the results of individual studies, in initiating or closing a discussion, the necessity for the Class Lesson arises once more. Here is an example from the procedure adopted by a Teacher dealing with a class of 10 to 12-year-olds studying the Gospel Story.

Before each fresh "collective lesson" a short period was occupied with the class *en bloc* for

† For answers to this question see page 55.

revision. This was taken, the scholars sitting with their scholars' "guides" open before them, but their notebooks closed. They obviously enjoyed this varied form of "revision," the Teacher calling out each item. When she read out the title of the first class lesson, the children recalled what they remembered of it. (Direct questioning was necessary at first, but later less so). Thus, for example, at question No. 2, demanding the study of a picture, the picture monitors would hold up their pictures; at No. 3 (a map drawing question), all the children show their maps; at No. 4 (a Bible reading question), volunteer to tell what story had been read; at No. 5 (a problem question), recall their written answers; at No. 7 (a printing question), repeat their printed texts; at No. 14 (an imaginative question), hold up the pictures drawn, etc. Revision is sometimes a weary business; variety in this matter is essential to interest. At a later stage this method of "revision by programme," described above, can be taken by the children, if desired, with both leaflets and notebooks closed.

CLASS DISCUSSIONS.

Let us now speak of the Class Lesson as "rounding off," so to speak, a period of individual study and Self-Teaching.

The Self-Teaching Guide on the book of Amos, used by many Teachers, and quoted, closes with the question: "What would Amos have said if he had visited our town to-day?" The Teacher, in taking such a course of study, will probably wait until all, or nearly all, the class have attempted this question, and then call for a symposium, and comparison of the answers given, adding at this point any reflections of his own, and thus rounding off and completing the study which has been done.

QUESTIONS AND DIFFICULTIES.

One last use of the Class Lesson deserves mention. At any time an individual *difficulty* can be explained to the class *as a whole*, or an individual *question* answered by the same method.

In fact, the teacher in charge of a Self-Teaching group, needs continually to decide, upon the emergence of any difficulty or *question*, whether such should best be treated *collectively* or *individually*.

Sometimes, it is best to let all the members of the class experience the difficulty by attempting the question before any help or explanation is given. Sometimes a few words by the Teacher beforehand may put the members of the class at once on the right lines, and save their time and energies for subsequent and more important work.

If a scholar has, through absence, missed a class lesson, a valuable opportunity is offered for the Teacher to give him the lesson individually in an abbreviated form.

The Class Lesson then must continue to have its place in the Self-Teaching Method. It may, and on some Sundays must, occupy all the time of the teaching period. Sometimes it will fill the first five minutes; sometimes the last five minutes. Sometimes (only rarely, because of the disturbance to work and thought) it may take up two or three minutes in the middle of the lesson period.

The Class Lesson is used only when wanted. Both collective and individual work should go on side by side.

VIII.

WHAT SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS THINK ABOUT SELF-TEACHING.

WHAT THE SCHOLARS THINK.

NOW, what do the scholars say about the Self-Teaching method. The following extracts are from a large number of "scholars'" opinions obtained by Teachers who were careful not to bias their scholars' minds beforehand by the way in which they put their questions.

First, let us hear the opinions of a mixed Bible Class of boys and girls, twelve to sixteen years. Here is Fred's conclusion: "I prefer the system we are now doing, as it is most interesting. It needs a little thought, and I think we will get on fairly well. By this method we get more knowledge, and can remember it better. My opinions on this subject.—F. M."

A girl writes: "I think that Self-Teaching is very interesting work. It is something to think about when we are at home."

Another member writes: "It is much the best way to learn."

A third says: "We all enjoy our lessons. It is the best way of teaching—we must work hard because other people cannot learn for us."

Another repeats: "I think Self-Teaching is by far the best, and it is interesting. It keeps our memories fresh."

Another candidly avows: "The lessons are

so interesting; if I did not like them I should not come. I hope we shall keep these lessons as long as possible."

Here is a batch of girls' opinions, ages ten to fourteen, astonishingly unanimous in their approval. Their reasons are various. "I can take my own time." "I have everything explained I do not know." "The brilliant girls need not wait for the backward girls to catch up to them, but can go on learning more and more." "Sometimes I have to wait, and then that time is wasted—in Self-Teaching I can go on." "When we go out to work, we will not be able to ask our Teacher what to do next." "When we are away there is no need to miss the work." "We do not have to wait for things to be explained to other girls when we ourselves already know it." "One can find out things for oneself. I would not like to return to my former style of working." "If we are deeply interested, we don't have to stop in the middle of it to go on to something else, but keep on and finish." "I like individual work—it makes us more dependent on ourselves." "It teaches us to be trustworthy and honourable without being watched." Here is a revelation:—"I prefer the individual work because my Teacher is not liable to get so cross with the aggravating girls." "I like individual work because if one finds out anything for oneself, she is more likely to remember than if a Teacher told one."

Now for a batch of boys' opinions—aged thirteen to fourteen. They express themselves, perhaps, more tersely. "Self-Teaching is a very good idea." "Very interesting." "I like it." "I like it." The approval is practically unanimous, although the class numbered forty. "It gives more time to learn a subject, and a chance to think it over." "A good way to learn, because

we have to find out things for ourselves." "You can learn much better than the Teacher talking." "The pupil can go straight on without waiting to be told what to do." "It is much quicker than Teacher can teach you." "I do like the new way of Self-Teaching, because I have got something to do during the lesson, not sitting still." "To my idea, what you learn yourself you remember longer than if your Teacher told you." "You can keep it in your mind better than you can when you are told." "I like the art of Self-Teaching because it attracts your mind to your work." "I like it—it's more homely." Another adds: "We are fed up with the other kind."

Next, let us read the views of a large class of some forty-five scholars, 10 to 13 years of age, working in a town day school. The question was put to them: "What do you think of this new way of having lessons? You may like this self-teaching way, or you may not like it at all, or you may like some alterations or improvements made in it. Write down exactly what you think."

The results were strikingly unanimous.

Out of a class of forty-five, two misunderstood the question, and explained the reason for having lessons on scripture, two put forward criticism; the rest were unanimous in their approval. "Delightful." "Wish we could always do it." "We do not have enough lessons. I should like more," are some of the comments. One enthusiast goes so far as to "hope that the whole of Great Britain's schools will be taught scripture in the same way." "It is better than the old way." "Far more interesting and exciting, to get your card finished first," adds one. "Much more suitable." Five ask definitely for more lessons of this type, or "mode," as one of them rather grandiloquently phrases it. The children emphasise two special

points in the method's favour:—(a) "It is much easier to learn," occurs in eleven answers. (b) "You learn more," "It gives you more information," "I understand more this way," "It helps you to find places much quicker," "It makes you use your brains," "It gets the ideas into our heads quicker," "We learn as much as we did before, and remember more." "It teaches us more than if the Teacher gave us lessons, because we have to find out everything for ourselves." A few speak of the "pictures" as adding to the work; some speak of the "method" in the abstract, one hoping with an unconscious malapropism that "It will still exist"; and one child instances as one of the method's advantages that "the Teacher gets a rest."

THE TEACHER'S VIEW.

What do the Teachers say? Here is part of a letter from a Teacher in a small country Sunday School, with a class ranging from seven to sixteen years: "All the children simply love it. My big boy, a girl of fourteen-and-a-half, and a boy of just thirteen, have four, sixteen, and ten questions now to finish; the others are well behind, and only do about two questions in half an hour. They are very slow to get the idea of working alone, and are not used to working their brains enough to understand what the questions mean. Until to-day I had only three of these last who would get on alone: all the others refused to begin a question without asking whether they should do it or what it meant, but to-day two more of them caught the thrill of going on alone, and did four questions on end without asking one question. But they do enjoy it, and there's no bother about giggles or talk on any other subject—there's no time. Miss Seven-year-old told her mother she wished she could

stay in Sunday School all the evening, and even the slow ones, who spend half the time doing nothing enjoy what they do achieve."

Here is part of a letter from a Teacher in a crowded town district, where she has a class of thirty-one girls, thirteen to seventeen years, with, as she says, "a class of noisy boys at the back of us."

"My girls are very interested in this method," she writes. "I have three girls slow at understanding things. I am not going to worry them to get through more quickly, as I want them to grasp what they can thoroughly. The girls are quite proud of their books. Really, their books are lovely; so far I am delighted with them. I have one girl of fourteen in the class, and in the ordinary class lessons she was very naughty and troublesome, constantly talking and upsetting those around her, but you would not believe the change. Now she is one of my best scholars, thanks to Self-Teaching. She is writing a lovely book."

This improvement was maintained. "The Self-Teaching has worked wonders," said the Teacher.

Later this Teacher writes: "Well, we have again completed our year's course of Self-Teaching Lessons, and have started afresh. The girls all like doing the work. When I went on my holidays last summer I left two older girls in charge of the class. I was away for three Sundays, and the girls carried on quite nicely. One very talkative girl is much more attentive now."

Here is a passage from the letter of a teacher working in a very unorganized and noisy Intermediate Department.

"I began the Self-Teaching Method using Guide C1 (textbook, "Life of our Lord"). Though the girls were 13 and 14 years, I thought

it better to begin with a very simple guide, as the class was not one from which one could expect any hard thinking. However, the girls soon became very interested in their work, and, with the exception of *one* girl I never had any real disciplinary trouble. This girl was growing physically very rapidly, and seemed too lazy on Sunday afternoons to express herself in any written work. Being naturally fond of fun, she mostly spent her time teasing other girls, but her field for that sport was now much more limited, and I have known the time when she couldn't get any girl to play with her. She did work herself, but intermittently. At Advent we began a new course. (Commandments and League of Nations. Duty towards God. N3.) This course made the girls *think* more than the first one.

What I valued about the method was the opportunity it gave to the girls who *wanted* to learn, and do so without being *hindered* by the undisciplined members of the class, and above all it does give such opportunities for individual conversation with the girls. Girls don't ask questions on things that puzzle them during a "Class Lesson." But their minds are just full of things they would like to know, and talk about. I often had to leave things unanswered—put off till another time—as there were fifteen girls, and it was as much as I could do to attend to them all. I had several little talks on Confirmation, though they had been unanimously *against* having a course of lessons on Confirmation. They just didn't understand it, and thought it was a dry subject, I suppose.

At the beginning of this year I took a vote on whether we should continue the Method. Half voted for Self-Teaching *entirely*, about a quarter for Self-Teaching generally, but an ordinary class lesson occasionally, and four girls (one, the lazy one) for

ordinary methods again. I agreed with those myself who wanted an occasional ordinary lesson; I had intended to give some, but it was awkward with a big class in a noisy schoolroom. The Senior Department had got somewhat like a bear garden on account of shortage of Teachers and other things, and the Superintendent had to be out of the room most of the time (to take a Bible class). However, one of the Teachers has persuaded her to let her begin "Self-Teaching."

Here is a final quotation from a Teacher's account of her experience with a large Self-Teaching class of children, 10 to 14 years.

"First, what difficulties in this first Self-Teaching course did we encounter?

Preliminary difficulties as to apparatus rapidly disappeared; the children ceased to be fussy over getting and returning their pictures, and left off asking questions, which a careful perusal of the 'guide' would have enabled them to answer themselves. After the first day they settled down and worked with remarkable keenness and perseverance. Certain assignments, needed re-statement to make their meanings clearer. The questions revealed the hasty and superficial reader and thinker, and the work itself gradually, though slowly, developed greater individual thought on the part of the children themselves.

What about the results?

This was evidenced in certain marked characteristics, which began to show in the class. The scholars became *less dependent* on me; they began to get the habit of tackling work by themselves, unstimulated and undirected, and to find pleasure in such work. 'Do you want me at all?' I asked one morning, putting my head into the room where the most advanced group already spoken of were working alone. 'Oh, no,' answered the

children, and it was obvious they spoke the truth. 'Do let us go on working alone,' they pleaded another day.

Again, an increased sense of *co-operation* began to show; the children helped each other when help was needed, and yet each, as far as could be seen, worked at full speed. There was generally a low buzz of conversation, but it was about the matter in hand. Indeed, it was difficult sometimes to get the children to stop working at the proper time.

Finally, *thought* began very evidently to stir; first, as to the details of apparatus, the wording of the questions, the arrangement of the notebooks; then it was shown in signs of *individuality* emerging at last in *spontaneous questions*."

IX.—THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SESSION.

WE have seen the working of a class using the Self-Teaching Method; it now remains for us to see how the programme for a whole afternoon in the Sunday School will be modified by the provision of opportunities for acting upon the principle of self-activity on the part of the scholars.

The following quotation, reprinted by permission from *The School Guardian*, Feb. 17th, 1923, will show the slight adaptations useful when a department works entirely on Self-Teaching lines, using some such programme form as is given below.

[A useful Self-Teaching Question for the Teachers' Training Class, or for a Senior Class of scholars, is to fill in such a programme, so as to emphasize some leading idea or thought expressed at the outset in the Leader's opening prayer.]

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR DEPARTMENTS AND FELLOWSHIPS.

ORDER OF WORK AND WORSHIP.

OPENING PRAYER (LEADER): O Lord Who didst say.....help us to feel how near Thou art and to be glad together in the Joy of Thy Presence. Amen.

ANNOUNCER (SCHOLAR): The Season is.....
Our message is

CANTOR (SCHOLAR): Hymn No.....beginning.....
.....

LEADER: Let us pray.

Prayers.

COLLECTION taken by WARDENS (SCHOLARS).

READER (SCHOLAR): Our Work is on
.....

Our Reading is about.....

It begins in the.....Chapter of.....
verses.....to.....

CLASS LESSON AND EXPRESSION
or

STUDY PERIOD AND SELF-TEACHING.

CANTOR (SCHOLAR): Hymn No.....beginning.....
.....

LEADER: Let us pray.

Prayers.

NOTICES:

“ To begin with, most of the apparatus of the school will have been made by the scholars, and if the school is not poor, pictures, flower-vases, a cross, &c., will all be the gifts of individual children or classes. A hymn-board, with its set of numbers, alms-bags, table cloths, bags for writing materials, &c., monitors' badges, blackboard dusters, a box for Intercessions and Thanksgivings, will all show the handiwork of the scholars.

Throughout the session the scholars will take a prominent part in the programme, the Superintendent only leading the prayers and giving the addresses, which will usually be of a definitely devotional nature. One point might be mentioned

here—where it is at all possible *the Leader will face the same way as the children*. He does not “read prayers to the school,” but he leads the children to the feet of a loving Father that together they may speak to Him.

Various offices will be held by the scholars. The “Cantor” will be responsible (1) before school, for giving out hymn-books and putting up the hymn-board with the numbers of the hymns to be sung; (2) during school, for announcing the numbers and first lines of hymns; (3) after school, for putting away board and books. The “Wardens” will take the collection, handing the alms-bags to the Leader, and after school will enter its amount and purpose in a book, and on a list for the notice-board. A “Reader” will read to the school a passage selected for the Lesson having previously practised it with the Leader or his Teacher. The “Secretary” will be responsible for the registers, and after school will make a list of the absentee scholars for the Sunday School visitor. Even the pianist will often be one of the elder scholars. Each class will have its own monitor, who will be responsible for the preparation, before school, of all the apparatus required by his class and for putting it away afterwards, seeing that no pencils are left broken, and that black-board chalk, &c., is not missing. Each of these monitors will also have some job for the whole school. For example, the putting up of pictures or preparation of the table flowers will probably be provided by each class in turn, and after school taken by a representative of the school to one of the sick or aged.

Let us picture a Sunday afternoon session in a middle school worked on such lines as these. About half an hour before school actually opens monitors and other officers begin to arrive and

settle to their various tasks. Their work is done seriously and well, because they feel that the school is really theirs: they chiefly are responsible for its smooth working. Ten minutes before school begins these officers join the Teachers and Leader in praying for God's blessing on the work of the school. Then the pianist goes to the piano and softly plays a voluntary during the entrance of the other scholars.

For the past three Sundays Guide — has been in use; thus some of our Lord's healing miracles have been studied. The central thought for this session is "Jesus the Healer—our King." Nelson's picture of our Lord healing the sick at even is on the board facing the scholars as they stand for opening worship.

The Leader begins by suggesting in a few words the Presence of God, and the central thought, and then leads the children in prayer to Him.

The Reader announces: "Our Lesson is taken from the sixth chapter of the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, beginning at the 54th verse"; then reads verses 54-56.

Then follows a discussion of the various healing miracles of our Lord studied in class during the past few Sundays, the Superintendent leading up to the thought of our great privilege in being allowed to help by our offerings in Christ's work of healing to-day.

One of the Wardens announces: "Our collection to-day will help to send a cripple child — to — Hospital." During a voluntary the collection is taken by both Wardens and placed on the Superintendent's table. All stand while the Superintendent asks God to accept and bless their gifts.

Intercessions for the sick follow, led by the Superintendent. Most of the subjects of interces-

sion have been suggested by the scholars themselves by means of the box near the door, which they are encouraged to use regularly. A thanksgiving for our own health and strength follows.

The Cantor announces, "Hymn No. —, Thine arm, O Lord, in days of old, was strong to heal and save."

The pianist plays a soft march after the hymn, during which each class goes to its own place for individual work. Of course, on no one Sunday will work in every class take the same form; for instance, on this Sunday in one class the Teacher is giving a group lesson to the whole class on Assignment 12, "Methods of Healing." In another class a few children are listening to the Teacher's description of "A Centurion of the Roman Army," while the others are working quietly by themselves. In still another class (an elder one) somewhat of a departure has been made from strictly following the Guide in that a discussion is in progress on the subject of healing in these days, ranging from treatment in the home to the use of the Church's power of healing, with its outward signs of anointing with oil and the laying on of hands.

In such ways "the Teachers' Lesson period" passes, until it is time for the reassembly of the whole school for closing worship.

The picture now on the board is Nelson's "Jesus, the World's Saviour and King." The Superintendent feels that all the afternoon the scholars' thought has been concentrated on suffering humanity, and it is his aim now to help the children to feel something of the wonder and majesty of the Healer—to help each child to feel "He is God—my God—I love Him—He loves me."

When the Superintendent has spoken for a few

minutes the Cantor announces, "Hymn No. —, My God, how wonderful Thou art."

School ends with prayers, including the recitation of the first part of the Gloria in Excelsis, as far as "God the Father Almighty"—led by the Superintendent.

The classes go out during a voluntary, the various officers remaining behind to perform their tasks."

G. S.

The following practical question with regard to the Self-Teaching Method may well come in here.

AGES AND NUMBERS OF SCHOLARS UNDER THE SELF-TEACHING METHOD.

With what ages can Self-Teaching Guides be tried? With any scholars who can read and write with pleasure to themselves; generally with children of eight and upwards, Study Cards with 7 and 8-year-olds. With what numbers can it be tried? With any numbers up to, say, forty. Naturally, the smaller the class the more individual attention can be given to each scholar.

COST.

	s.	d.
10 Scholars' Self-Teaching Guides at 1d.	0	10
(The set can be used afterwards for other classes.)		
1 Scholar's Guide Case	0	1
1 Class Portfolio	0	1
1 Text Book	1	0
1 Picture Set	0	3
Pamphlet on "Self-Teaching in Religious Instruction" ...	0	2
Total price, not including Scholar's Books, Pencils, Bibles, and Hymn Books	2	5

(Or, for children under 9 or 10, two sets of 16 Study Cards, 2s.)

X.—THE SUNDAY SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE.

A DREAM AND A PROPHECY.

SUNDAY School problems oppress some of us to-day; they oppressed us thirty years ago. What will be the problem and solutions of the Sunday School thirty years hence? How are things tending? What will survive? What will perish? The following fantasy is an attempted answer:—

I had fallen asleep cogitating, in the early days of the year 1924, over the still present problem of the Sunday School. Suddenly I awoke, or seemed to awake, and found myself in broad daylight walking along a familiar town street, in the sure and certain knowledge that I had somehow or other stepped into the year 1954, that the time was Sunday morning, and that somehow I was out to inquire into the state of that old familiar parochial agency—the Sunday School. In the distance I could hear a church bell ringing; surely the Sunday School was not far off. Where was it, and what was it like? Did it, indeed, still exist? I turned to inquire, and found myself talking to, or rather being talked to by, a layman, evidently on his way with some serious purpose.

"Sunday School," he answered, "Sunday School? I expect you mean Sunday *House*. I'll show you—it's quite near by, in Rupert Street. I believe there used to be a school there in old days,

but we call the place our Sunday House—St. Alphege's Sunday House."

"Yes, I've read about that Sunday School you talk of. People found the name a bit of a hindrance—thought it best to have a change; it had an over-pious flavour to some; others thought it babyish. I don't wonder."

"When does your 'Sunday House' begin?" I asked.

"Begin?" my friend replied. "Why, any time you like, and end at any time you like, too! I see you don't get my meaning. It goes on all day. I know they used in the old days to try and cram their Sunday School business into one hour in the morning, and another in the afternoon—sometimes none in the morning at all. Of course it didn't work. First of all there wasn't room for everybody—boys, girls, infants, and young people—though, for a time, they used to fill up church and school with all their scholars, of every age, massed in together like the black hole of Calcutta, so to speak. *Our* Sunday School classes met at all hours. We keep two small rooms vacant for them. Miss Smith has her class at 10.15 a.m.; Mr. Jones books up 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.; Mr. Smith 3 to 4; Miss Brown, 4 to 5; and so on—a succession of classes, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

"Another difficulty came up, I understand, in the past. The scholars were always coming too late or too early for the hour fixed, because of the varying home habits: that was inconvenient; our plan works best.

"Then the grown-up people in Church on Sunday morning and evening began to complain; they said they would not have grown-up services spoiled by children who attended because they had nowhere to be except the streets. Sunday School must be open during Church time, they said.

Then came another complication: Sunday games and Sunday travelling. After a time you couldn't get the boys and girls on Sunday afternoons; yet few of them wanted to miss out Sunday School altogether. All this affected the Teachers, too. You could get one Teacher at one time, and one at another. You couldn't get them *all at once*, that was the point; either morning or afternoon. So you limited your own supply. If a new Teacher joins our staff to-day, *he fixes his class hour and then collects his class*. So, somehow, our Sunday House *grew up*, I suppose; anyhow, it's here now. It opens from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; then the young people have it after Church till 10 p.m. Here's the time table, just by the door. Look at it."

We stepped inside the Sunday House, having knocked and been admitted by a girl about thirteen years old. "Name and number?" she said, and explanations were made. "I shall be off duty at 11 a.m.," she added. "Tom Thorp is on then," and she returned to an inner room, where I saw her sit down to a book.

On the wall hung the time-table of St. Alphege's Sunday House. It ran as follows:—

ST. ALPHEGE'S SUNDAY HOUSE.

OCCUPATIONS (*in Classrooms.*)

Library and Self-Teaching	...	...	10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Seniors).
Class Lessons (Rooms A and B. See separate Time Table)	10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Seniors).	3 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Seniors).	
Crafts	...	...	3 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Seniors).
Pictures and Models	...	10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Juniors).	

MEETINGS (*in Hall.*)

Junior Service	...	10.15 a.m.	...	(Juniors only).
(First Sunday in the month in Church)				
Junior Story Hour	...	12 noon	...	(Juniors only).

112 SELF-TEACHING IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Celebrations	...	...	2.30 p.m.	...	...	(Anyone).
Senior Service in Church	...	...	2.30 p.m.	...	...	(Seniors only).
Boys' and Girls' Story Hour	...	...	3.30 p.m.	...	...	(Seniors only).
Reading	...	...	4.30 p.m.	...	...	(Seniors only).
Hymn Service	...	...	5.30 p.m.	...	...	(Seniors only).
Lantern Service	...	...	7 p.m.	...	...	(Anyone).
Young People's Fellowship	...	...	8 p.m. to 10 p.m.	...	...	(All over 14 yrs.)

ADMISSION HOURS.

Junior (under 8 years). 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Seniors (8-14 years) ... 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

“What does it all mean?” I asked my guide. “Why *two* divisions—occupations *and* meetings? What is the difference between the two? “Well,” he returned, sitting down for what promised to be a prolonged conversation, “it’s this way:

“The old Sunday School, even when graded and reformed, tried to do the impossible—to cater for the child as an individual, and also for the child as a Church member, at almost the same moment, and in the same place. The very arrangement of the room showed the absurdity. Forms and chairs were, I have heard, carefully arranged for the opening mass devotional exercises, rearranged for class teaching in small groups, and rearranged for mass work at the close. Consequence, noise, loss of time, multiplication of labours, general inconvenience except under very skilled handling.

“A further difficulty grew to be more serious. Some Teachers, Clergy, and lay, are excellent at mass work, leading intercessions or prayers, telling a story, taking a hymn practice, giving a lecture or devotional address, but *not* suited for dealing with a small group or with individuals. Some Teachers, again, are *At* at individual and group

work, and no hand at mass teaching. There are two Teachers in our classrooms now, while I am talking to you, one taking a confirmation class and another a set of young communicants. We have four Study groups going on between 4 and 6 p.m., for advanced Seniors working on three months' courses; a boy can join a course for three months, choosing which course he likes, and change to another when that is over. Liturgy, Prophets, Gospel, Church History, are our four options this year.

To go back, we found that some children liked mass work, and hated individual work, and *vice versa*, and their likes changed at different times in their life. A certain number liked both individual and mass work; they do still. We saw this early on, and made up our minds to separate the two things, and let the children come practically when they liked and do what they liked. So our 'occupations' mean *individual* work; the scholar is an individual here, only responsible for himself, only consulting a Teacher when he feels he needs to, choosing for himself what he wants to do out of the occupations provided. You notice that Play is *not* one of the occupations provided by the Sunday House! If you want to play, you go outside. As we have no prizes or marks, there is no point in staying inside just to upset other people, and no one does.

"A boy may drop in for half-an-hour's reading or Self-Teaching or craft work any time he likes, and go away when he is tired. If he wants class lessons he attaches himself to a Teacher, and the time is fixed for their mutual convenience.

"Our *meetings*, now, are quite different. I'll tell you about those when we've seen round."

"Here is the Library"; and we passed through a big hall which was evidently in former

days a Day School classroom. Much of the furniture remained, but the desks, arranged in pairs, and turned to face and touch each other, made very creditable library tables. A double row of disused infant desks, placed one above another along the wall, had been adapted, one could see, for a convenient bookcase.

A "Librarian," with a badge on, sat reading at the Teacher's desk. Pictures hung round the walls, also one or two maps, and a notice saying, "Silence is Requested." On one side of the room hung a row of hooks, with small bags suspended from them. A cupboard stood half open.

Half-a-dozen boys and girls sat reading; one boy was going through a set of stereoscopic photographs, another printing a large notice for the Sunday School, a big girl was sitting in a corner reading a poetry book. "Never very many here, especially early," said my guide. "Too quiet for most, but always some. Amy, over there, always drops in for half-an-hour's reading on Sunday morning, and sometimes she gets half-an-hour later on. Folk are packed close in Amy's house. It's her only chance of quiet. There are always a good number on these Self-Teaching courses. Here is one coming in."

A boy had followed us in through the door, and I watched him. He went up to a numbered hook on the wall, took down a bag from it, found a vacant desk, sat down, and proceeded to put out the contents—two cards with hand-printing on them, and notebook, pencil, Bible, hymn book, and Self-Teaching guide emerged. He opened his notebook, looked through the Guide, fetched a "portfolio" of maps, pictures, and plans from a shelf, with a small text-book, asked the Librarian at the desk a question, and began to study, sometimes reading, sometimes printing, or writing, or drawing.

"How long will he stay?" I asked.

"Oh! maybe twenty minutes," my guide replied, "sometimes an hour. He may come back later. You see the rest of them at it."

By this time another dozen scholars had settled themselves in for Self-Teaching—some on the Bible, some on Church History, some on Liturgy, some on Foreign Mission topics. They came and went as they chose, fetching their bags as they came in, and hanging them up as they went away.

"What about the bags?" I asked.

"Oh! these," my guide answered, "are done in Craft time. The first thing a boy or girl does, if he or she wants to study, is to put in some time at the Craft Class—cover his own Bible or hymn book (or bind one of the Church's hymn book copies), make markers for each, print his Church Calendar for the year, Creed, copy the time table of the School House, illuminate his Lord's Prayer, and sharpen his pencil, and make a bag to hold everything. They never lose anything this way, we find."

"But what about the little children?" I put in. "Where is the Sunday Kindergarten, with its stories, and baptism roll, and expression work?"

"Part of it is here," said my guide. "Come and see the picture room." We passed into another classroom, evidently one used for infants, as a few little chairs and tables remained. The floor was bare wood blocks, but dotted about over it were small roll-up mats, on which some twenty or thirty little children were sitting, looking at sacred picture books or drawing boards. Two young "girl helpers" seemed to be in charge; later on their places were taken by two very capable looking boys of somewhere about the same age. Through the door came two small children hand in hand, a three and a five-year-old, as one might guess.

The elder of them picked out two mats from a pile at the end of the room, received a picture book, pieces of chalk, and a small blackboard from one of the young "helpers," unrolled one mat, and set his little brother on it, and began to turn over the pages of his picture book. The younger was soon attracted by a big sand tray at the end of the room, where the other "young helper" was making a model of some Bible scene, with the eager help of three or four little children.

"The older children often drop in to help in a model," said my guide. "Even the fourteen-year-olds do it." A tray at the end of the room held boxes containing Self-Teaching picture cards, a pile of paper, and a box of pencils. I saw an eight-year-old go up and help himself to one of these cards, take a sheet of paper and a pencil, and sit down at one of the tables and begin to turn over his picture card and to draw and print on his piece of paper.

"But what about these *meetings* you spoke of?" I asked. "What happens in this big room? What is going to happen now?"

"Well," said my guide, "at eleven we have the little children's service. They are getting the room ready now." A few young helpers were already busy placing chairs, hanging up pictures, arranging flowers, etc. "It's quite short, the service, merely hymns and prayers and carols, with a picture or Nature Talk in the middle of it; and two helpers take part in it—one at the piano and the other at the table. There's a break after it, and the children stay or not, as they wish, for the Story Hour at twelve. Here you'd see half the room arranged in small groups, with young helpers telling a lesson story, as in the old days, after a weekly preparation class. If a young helper does not come on Sunday, his children join the 'over-

flow' group, taken Sunday by Sunday by the Leader in the other half of the room. This overflow group leaves directly the story is over; the small groups who have helpers in charge of them stay on for expression work—drawing, modelling, or what not. Each child leaves when he is finished—a very considerable advantage to all. Any child who does not want to do Expression Work just runs home when the story is over. Some children only come in for the Story Hour, and not for the preceding service. In old days they were expected to attend both service and story, whether they wanted to or not; hence I understand there were difficulties, inattention, irreverence, and boredom."

"What are Celebrations?" I asked.

"Oh, Baptism and Cradle Roll Celebrations, Birthday Celebrations, Church Year Celebrations, Collections, Marches, and the rest, just as in the old Primary Sunday Kindergarten; they never had enough time for them in the old days, and we found that the older children liked to come, too, or, at any rate, some of them. The young helpers take these celebrations, of course—one of their most important works."

"What is the Boys' and Girls' Story Hour?"

"Oh, just a story—a good long one, and no morals at the end. Chairs all in rows, story tellers in rota from the congregation, and stories—Bible, Church History, missionary adventures, heroes of any age or clime—good biography, at any rate. We sing 'For all the Saints' at the close. The programme for the quarter is posted beforehand."

"The Lantern Lecture is worked on similar lines; we are turning it into a cinema shortly, and saving for films. Subjects? 'Whatsoever things are honest, true, and of good report'—sometimes the story of Creation, sometimes the growth of Brotherhood, sometimes a missionary district, or

the history of an old cathedral, or a series of good pictures. The hall is crowded at both of these with young and old. Of course, we don't bother with registers or marks of any kind, and the music covers the noise of assembly and dismissal."

"Reading, 5 p.m. What is that?"

"Oh, that's for the quiet ones who like to be read to—biography, story, allegory, and a bit of poetry at the beginning. A rota of good readers from the congregation take that. People never used their *congregations* in the old days to help the children—tried to make them all *teach*, and that was hopeless, of course. Why, we have another rota of musical members of the congregation for the Hymn Service; nothing but hymns here, a sing-song hour once a month held in church; very cheerful, and always very crowded."

"At 8 p.m. we turn out everyone for the Young People's Sunday Evening Fellowship—a young person must be over fourteen years—and they crowd in directly the Church Service is over."

"And what is the Fellowship?" I asked, noticing for the first time the stage at the end of the hall, a stack of deck chairs, and a pile of rugs.

But my guide faded into mist, and I suddenly awoke in A.D. 1924.

My first thought was that I had not liked my guide; he was too confident, too cocksure, too proud of his new plans, too contemptuous of the old ones. Then I began to think about what he said. The Sunday House was not very revolutionary after all, and the more I thought of it, the more I saw sense in its arrangements, or, at least, in some of them. At any rate, a few were worth trying; so I wrote down my dream, and here it is.

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